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THE Nonconformist.

THE DISSIDENCE OF DISSENT AND THE PROTESTANTISM OF THE PROTESTANT RELIGION.

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Ecclesiastical Affairs.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL SITUATION IN FRANCE.

THE importance of the discussion raised at Versailles last week on the ecclesiastical politics of France can scarcely be understood without a retrospective glance at the relations of certain violent factions which threaten to necessitate another "Saviour of Society." On the fall of a dynasty, maintained in great measure by the all-pervasive influence of priestcraft, there appeared to be some hope that the new Government of France, whatever its difficulties, would at least be emancipated from ecclesiastical bondage. Such hopes, however, were very imperfectly realised. The fact that the German conquerors of Napoleon III. were at open war with the Church necessarily tended to throw the sympathies of the conquered nation on to the other side. Some of the most brilliant military memories of France had been associated with the claim of the Eldest Son of the Church to arrange the affairs of Italy, and to impose conditions on Italian freedom. The Conservative Republicans, in whose hands the timidity of peasant proprietors, after much vacillation, left the affairs of State, could not afford to dispense altogether with a half-hearted and suspicious support from the Church. The intrigues for the restoration of the ancient dynasty appeared to derive their most formidable and, indeed, their only importance, from the passionate devotion of Popish fanatics, who were stimulated by the most extravagant promises of privileges for their Church. No statesman in France of any note, not even M. Gambetta, up to the present time, has been able even to conceive the possibility of the separation of Church and State. Under these circumstances, there seemed no resource for President MacMahon and his Ministers but to bind the behemoth of ecclesiasticism as well as they could to the chariot of government. But for this purpose much pampering and soothing were necessary, and, above all, every open attack upon religious institutions, supported and privileged by the State, must be sternly repressed.

The Papists were not slow to avail themselves of their marvellous organisation for the purpose of improving the situation. More than a year ago we called attention to a remarkable book, by the Abbé Michaud, on the condition of the Roman Catholic Church in France, a book evidently the result of extensive observation and accurate knowledge, in the course of which the author exposes the plans by which the Ultramontanes were rapidly gaining command of the executive government, the army, the universities, the schools, the organisation of charity and workmen's clubs. The result has been that the very memory of Gallicanism as a national religion has almost perished, and nothing is left but a centralised ecclesiastical despotism, all the machinery of which is worked from the Vatican. What always happens where free and open controversy is suppressed has happened here. The newspapers, being denied the legal right of adverse comment, have betaken themselves to occasional scurrilous attacks and scandalous stories, the rapid sales of which, together with the notoriety gained by them, have compensated the proprietors for fines and temporary suspensions. And on the other hand the passions of ecclesiastics inflamed by vulgar abuse, have declared war against the enemies of the Church, whether in France, Italy, or Germany, and have pointed to the revolutionary violence of the adversaries as a justification for their view that there can be no permanent or settled peace for France or Europe until the Pope shall enjoy his own again. Thus the position of religious controversy in France has come to be such as is hardly conceivable in this country. On the one hand, we have a set of furious bigots whose ideal of Christian civilisation is the Spain of Philip II.; and on the other, a mob of irreverent and irrational mockers whose notion of intellectual progress consists in wanton, shameful, and witless ridicule of the grandest fountains of the world's inspiration. Free religion is prohibited, and therefore rational religion cannot exist. "Truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter." With the exception of a few and feeble Protestant congregations, torn by internal dissensions that are inflamed by State bondage, there is absolutely no middle party between the senile folly of superstition and the destructive madness of Atheism. The shameful extracts recently given in our papers from effusions of the latter school must have revolted every English heart, and produced the conviction that if this is really the temper of the revolution in France, there is considerable danger lest the latter end of that nation should be worse than the first.

Under such circumstances of tension, with no safety-valves in constitutional freedom, the discussion raised by the interpellation of M. Leblond on Thursday evening, is of the gravest import. Two Bishops, of Nîmes and Névers, have distinguished themselves by the boldness of their pastorals, in which they plainly imply the desirability of armed intervention to restore the temporal dominion of the Pope. With the same view they have circulated petitions addressed to Marshal MacMahon and the Chambers, exhorting them to use every means in their power to restore the Papal States, which of course means the disintegration of Italy. The comments made in clerical papers have far exceeded the bounds usually imposed upon the French press. Victor Emmanuel is called "the Savoyard King," and his soldiers are stigmatised as "Savoyard hordes," and the articles in question are almost as directly calculated to excite a crusade as the discourses of Peter the Hermit. M. Leblond demanded to know what measures had been taken by the Government with regard to these pastorals, and insisted upon a rigorous application of the law. An interpellation in the French Chamber of Deputies is a very different thing from a question put to the Government in the English House of Commons. It allows of exposition and argument, and is the foundation of a debate, just as a resolution would be with us. In the course of this debate the violence of the factions we have described was strongly displayed. But there appears to have been an ominous absence of any indication of a body of moderate opinion strong enough to mediate between them. Indeed, the correspondent of the *Times* asserts that the only party which is not represented in the Chamber is the party of France. M. Jules Simon of course represented the policy of the Government; but that policy, as described by him, seems to be nothing more than a timid trimming between opposite factions, the amount of concession to either side being measured by the fears of the Executive. In reading the guarantees promised by Italy to the Papacy, and praising the scrupulous manner in which these guarantees had been observed, he certainly implied the right of France to supervise the relations of the Pope and the Italian monarchy—a right which could not possibly be practically asserted without plunging the nation into war with Italy, and, in the event of success, with Germany as well. He denounced the violence of newspapers on whichever side it might be shown, and said that the French Cabinet had taken measures against the renewal of abuses of language such as those of the Bishops of Nîmes and Névers. Both the Right and the Left, we are informed, "applauded with a certain irony," and the Minister left the Tribune, giving satisfaction to neither. The next day M. Gambetta delivered an oration, in which he apparently endeavoured, by the violence of his language against the clergy, to regain the support that he has lost amongst extreme Radicals by the general moderation of his Parliamentary tactics. He was not, he said, in favour of the separation of Church and State, obviously because he feared the political influence of an emancipated church. What he preferred was the restoration of the Gallican Church, maintained in comparative independence by a strict observance of the Concordat. He might as well attempt to restore the Monarchy of Louis XIV. In fact, the other enterprise is the more impracticable of the two. His concluding words, "L'ennemi c'est le cléricalisme," were scarcely calculated to conciliate those who must constitute the National Church. And altogether the impression made by the debate is that the irreconcilable antipathy of factions in France constitutes a very serious danger.

Upon the origin and peculiar dangers of the ecclesiastical situation in France, much light was thrown by Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., in the admirable and comprehensive address delivered from the chair of the Congregational Union (now first occupied by a layman), on the "Relations of the Temporal and Spiritual Power in the different Nations of Europe." Taking this broad survey, the hon. member reasonably hopes that it may "enlarge our minds to some just conception of the might and magnitude of this great conflict," and elevate "our aims who in this country are urging that movement onward," so that we may feel "that, if we succeed, as we hope to do, in finding a solution for this great problem, which shall ultimately redound to the advantage of both Church and State, we shall be

giving help and hope to millions of our fellow men and fellow Christians who are elsewhere battling with the same difficulty." Mr. Richard's address, upon which we have not time to comment at present, will, we doubt not, be read with profound interest. He gives us, as we have indicated, the key to the deplorable religious condition of France. As he shows by reference to historical facts, it was Napoleon I., with his sordid statecraft, who destroyed the comparatively independent Gallican Church, and laid the foundation for that Ultramontane fanaticism and ascendancy, which now so disquiets the nation and threatens a new revolution in France.

THE WORK OF THE FUTURE.

THE outbreak of war, and the serious crisis that has arisen at home in reference to our foreign policy, have naturally diverted public attention from the important proceedings of the Triennial Conference of the Liberation Society. The fact is not a matter for much regret; still less for discouragement. If the meetings of that assembly have inspired the supporters of the society with renewed zeal, a deeper conviction of the urgency of its claims, and a more resolute determination to carry them into effect, they will have subserved its primary object; and we cannot doubt that the hundreds of Free Churchmen from all parts of the country who attended last week's Conference, will have returned home in that spirit, and ready for renewed work on behalf of a movement which is making rapid strides in maturing public opinion.

The signal success of the Conference at a time when public excitement is absorbed in international events, increases the responsibilities of the new Executive Committee. Their plans will naturally take wider scope than heretofore, and the movement they conduct will become more national in action as well as in name. The peculiar relations of political parties, and the serious check which has been given to the reorganisation of the Liberal party, will not dishearten the friends of religious equality, but enable them to act the more freely. It is for them to occupy the ground in advance. It is less likely than ever that the Liberals will soon have a definite programme, or be called upon to assume the responsibilities of office. But while they are quiescent, the supporters of disestablishment have a golden opportunity before them for persistently educating public opinion up to their views, and turning to account their compact organisation. The lengthened discussion that took place at the Cannon-street Hotel on the relations of their cause to the Liberation party, and the necessity of early electoral action, is a sign that the question is taking a more advanced position. We have to win over the constituencies as well as to convert public opinion, and to bring disestablishment to the front while not getting into antagonism with our political allies. This can only be done by early preparation and individual effort. The present Parliament cannot last three years more, and may by an unexpected conjuncture of events, always possible during a war crisis, be brought to a premature end. As was said last week in reference to this subject, "Those who have the strongest convictions of the evils of State-Churchism ought not to be surpassed in zeal and promptitude by politicians bent upon mere party objects. When political committees at headquarters are moving, *they* ought not to be quiescent. Weeks, if not months, before Parliamentary writs are issued, the work of electoral preparation may be completed; and those who defer action till a dissolution is proclaimed might as well altogether hold their hand."

The new arrangements relative to the Secretariat of the Liberation Society, which were reported to the Conference, are of good augury for the future. The confidence reposed by the Executive Committee in the ability, experience, and devotion of the secretary was signally exhibited in the plan submitted for increasing the efficiency of the official staff. After thirty years of invaluable and unremitting service, Mr. Carvell Williams had earned an incontestable claim to be relieved of some of the more onerous work of the Secretariat, and the happy expedient was devised of combining that necessary object with a scheme by which the society will retain him, and have the advantage of those services, in a position of greater responsibility and distinction. Not only did the Conference cordially endorse the arrangement constituting Mr. Williams Chairman of the Parliamentary and Electoral Committees, and Vice-Chairman of the Executive, but it expressed with emphatic unanimity and much enthusiasm its sense of obligation to the tried secretary of the society. Such a tribute of confidence and approval is as rare as was the occasion that drew it forth. Mr. Carvell Williams has now by universal acclamation been placed in a position where he can more effectively direct the machinery and operations of the society, without being hampered by laborious clerical duties; and we have no doubt the change will be as advantageous to the society as it is agreeable to himself. Resigning no duties that cannot be adequately performed by others of the official staff, he will be free specially to employ his lengthened experience and abilities in those spheres of activity which will become of increasing importance in proportion as the Liberation movement grows in public favour.

ECCLESIASTICAL ENDOWMENTS IN CEYLON.

(*From the Times, May 2.*)

The question raised in the House of Commons yesterday by Alderman M'Arthur respecting our ecclesiastical establishment in Ceylon is, to say the least, an exceedingly uncomfortable one, and its uncomfortableness was not lessened by the defence which was offered for the existing arrangements. The case is one of those in which the indisputable facts are more suggestive than any arguments; and there was yesterday no material dispute respecting them. The population of Ceylon is something less than two and a-half millions. Of these, a million and a-half are Buddhists, nearly half-a-million are Hindoos, and about 172,000 are Mahomedans. The Christians number about a quarter of a million; but of these 190,000 are Roman Catholics, and of the remainder a considerable proportion belong to other bodies than the Church of England. In a community thus constituted we at present maintain out of the taxation of the colony that which, for all practical purposes, is an ecclesiastical establishment, with a bishop at its head, at a cost of 14,000*l.* a year. Now, the details of this arrangement are of consequence, both in explaining how it arose and for the purpose of determining how it shall be dealt with. But it may be confidently asked whether any explanations can deprive such a state of things of that which we have ventured to call an uncomfortable aspect. Somehow or other, no matter how, we find ourselves supporting the religious worship and religious creed of a few thousand Protestant Christians out of taxes which are levied upon a native population—to put out of question the Roman Catholics—who are, with insignificant exceptions, adherents of Eastern faiths. Mr. Lowther and Mr. Talbot raised some pleas respecting our exact rights in the matter, and Mr. Lowther said, in particular, that we do not take more than a farthing a head. Be it so; but, supposing the right to exist, we should like to know whether Englishmen in general can feel easy in insisting upon it. When it comes before them, as it must, in this naked form, do they think it quite consistent with generosity, with independence of feeling, or even with a due display of faith in their own religion, to extract a farthing a head per annum from a poor population of Buddhists and Brahmins in support of an English bishop and English chaplains? We do not know that such an inquiry needs to be insisted upon, but when the case is examined more closely we fear it becomes worse instead of better.

The manner in which the present Establishment grew up is very intelligible and excusable. Ceylon is in one or two respects in a different position from other colonies. When we conquered it from the Dutch, we undertook by treaty the maintenance of the Dutch Presbyterian Church; and, of course, this is an obligation which, in some form or other, we cannot avoid discharging. We found, in other words, something of an Establishment already existing. But, besides this, we were, of course, bound to maintain chaplains for the benefit of the soldiers whom we sent to regions then so remote from this country. In those days it would have been hardly possible for any voluntary agency in this country to supply ministers of religion for our growing dependencies in the most distant parts of the world. Chaplains, moreover, are an essential part of our military establishment; they accompanied our troops wherever they went; and, of course, like the rest of the army, they were supported out of the revenues raised in the conquered countries. So far the arrangement, even if a little anomalous when closely examined, was natural and inevitable. It was, indeed, soon found to be imperative to lay down a rule, which is still in force, that chaplains to our military stations should not act in any way as missionaries. It was felt from the first that if clergymen in the service of the Government attempted to proselytise among the natives, it would be assumed that the influence of the Government itself was directed to undermine the native faith; and the injustice of even appearing to use our political superiority for this purpose has been a cardinal principle of our rule in the East. But in course of time, as chaplains become numerous, it seemed desirable that there should be some ecclesiastical authority at their head. The great missionary societies had at the same time been multiplying their agencies, and they also began to desire some local supervision for their missionaries similar to that to which they were accustomed at home. Such supervision, in the minds of English Churchmen, could only be that of a bishop; a bishop could only exist with a territorial designation; and, amid general acquiescence, Parliament established the three bishoprics of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and endowed them out of Indian revenues. So far as the intentions of Government were concerned, these bishops were, no doubt, nothing more than chaplains-general. But it was unavoidable that they should at once assume a far more extensive authority. All the ideas which had grown up around the Episcopate in this country were unconsciously transferred to the East, and a bishop came to be regarded as having general charge of the interests of Christianity within his diocese. The consequence is that at this moment a very excellent but very young gentleman, who was recently sent out as bishop to Ceylon, is asserting an official jurisdiction over the agents of the Church Missionary Society, and thus forcing upon the notice of the native population the internal quarrels of Christians. The practical result, therefore, at the present moment is that the funds devoted to the ecclesiastical establishment of Ceylon are employed for something far more than the mere provision of public worship and religious instruction to the military servants of the Government. They are applied in a constantly increasing degree to the support of agencies for the subversion of native faiths, and, to all intents and purposes, we are taxing Buddhists in order to maintain Christian agencies for the overthrow of Buddhism.

These are the broad facts, and they are certainly not to be explained away by such pleas as Mr. Lowther used. We should prefer to regard some of his excuses as urged in inadvertence. He condescended, for example, to plead that as the Buddhist community are possessed of no fewer than 376,000 acres of land for the maintenance of their religion, it was only reasonable some public contribution should be made for the maintenance of Christianity. The contrast is the greatest aggravation of whatever is objectionable in the arrangement impugned. These 376 000 acres of land represent the sacrifices made by Buddhists in past days for the maintenance of their own religion; and, if they suggest anything, it is that Christians might be similarly liberal in support of their own religion. It is really something to be ashamed of when a representative of the Government sets up a claim for an establishment of Christianity on the ground that we have not deprived the Buddhists of the wealth which their own devotion has bestowed upon the representatives of their faith. When it is necessary to appeal to arguments like these in defence of the existing arrangement, its inherent unsoundness becomes even painfully apparent. It is a strange confusion which can induce a man like Mr. Talbot to draw a parallel from endowments in this country. All such endowments have been, in one way or another, the voluntary gifts of Christians. In Ceylon we are dealing with funds with which Christians, as a body, have nothing to do. The case, we can only repeat, is an extremely uncomfortable one. Existing rights must, of course, be respected, but we should be sorry to suppose that, when the circumstances come to be realised, English Christians can much longer be content to allow their religion to be be subsidised by Buddhists and Mahomedans. According to Mr. Lowther, Christianity in Ceylon costs a farthing a-head to a million and a-half of heathens. Could not a million and a-half Christians in England contribute a farthing a-head for such a purpose?

A translation of M. de Laveleye's essay on "Protestantism and Catholicism" has, with gross intolerance, been confiscated in Bohemia. Our readers may recollect that Mr. Gladstone published a translation of this essay in English a year or two ago.

A declaration and protest against what is called "the unconstitutional attempt of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to repeal the ornaments rubric, and to subvert the principle upon which the reformation of the Church of England is based," has been signed by more than 2,000 clergymen.

Dr. Lee, Archdeacon of Dublin, has issued a circular requesting all clergymen dissenting from the new Prayer-book to enter a formal protest before June next. No Enabling Act having been passed by this Synod, he holds all revision acts done by it to be illegal.

In a letter from Lord Beaconsfield to the Dublin Corporation, the Prime Minister declines to receive a deputation in reference to the Italian Clerical Abuses Bill, and adds that from press of business he cannot have a day to receive one from the Catholic University.

A gravamen, signed by the Dean of Bangor and others, has been addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in which it is stated that the Church in Wales suffers grievous loss from the fact that the Welsh Press has been permitted to fall almost entirely into the hands of persons notoriously hostile to the Church.

It is rumoured that Government intends to conciliate the High-Church party as far as possible in the selection of the new bishops. The appointment of the Rev. A. W. Thorold, M.A., vicar of St. Pancras, to the see of Rochester (on the translation of Bishop Claughton) is not strongly objected to in any quarter. He is a Moderate Evangelical.

THE RIDSDALE JUDGMENT.—It is understood that the decision in the Ridsdale case has given rise to some prolonged discussions among the members of the Privy Council, and that it is to this cause and to the illness of Lord Justice Amphlett that the delay in delivering judgment is due. The *Morning Post* confirms the statement that the Privy Council will sanction the eastward position, but condemn the vestments, but that this will be the decision of a majority and not of all the judges.

RITUALISTS AND DISESTABLISHMENT.—On Wednesday last the Ritualistic League for the Disestablishment of the National Church, met, under the presidency of the Rev. A. H. Mackonochie, and finally settled its constitution and arranged its policy and plans. The council consists of twelve clergymen and twelve laymen, the incumbent of St. Alban's, Holborn, being chairman. The meeting was unanimous and enthusiastic. More than 1,000 of the clergy have given in their adhesion to the principle as "the only practical method of securing relief from Erastian tyranny and State injustice."—*Whitehall Review.*

ANOTHER BURIAL CASE.—A high-flying clergyman, the Rev. R. N. Jackson, vicar of Winchcombe, near Cheltenham, has unintentionally given a smart fillip to the agitation against the Government Burials Bill. A few weeks ago at the funeral of a venerable and respected member of the Wesleyan body, Mr. Jackson omitted the words "sure and certain," in the well-known sentence, "in the sure and certain hope," &c., and subsequently bluntly refused to offer any explanation to the reasonably-offended family. The matter was thereupon referred to the bishop, who told the vicar that his conduct was illegal, and desired him not to do so again; but Mr. Jackson, with characteristic High-Church contempt for his diocesan, repeated the offence a few days ago at the graveside of another Wesleyan.

THE DISESTABLISHMENT MOVEMENT IN SCOTLAND.—The following circular, signed by the official representatives of the London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow Committees of the Society, has been addressed to its principal supporters in Scotland:—"The Executive Committee believe that opinion in favour of disestablishment is so ripening in Scotland, that it will now be practicable to commence a vigorous and sustained agitation, having in view Parliamentary and electoral action of a more decided kind than has yet been adopted. They further believe that, for that purpose, there is needed some central organisation in Scotland, which will unite the society's local representatives, in spirit and in action, and give to the movement a new and powerful impetus. It has therefore been proposed to form a Scottish Council of the society, to co-operate with the Executive Committee in London; while possessing the requisite authority for directing the society's operations in Scotland. These proposals will be submitted to a conference of the Society's Scottish friends, to be held in Glasgow, during the sittings of the United Presbyterian Synod. The conference will be held on Thursday, May 17, at twelve o'clock, in the Hall of Greyfriars United Presbyterian Church, North Albion-street, Glasgow. It will be presided over by John Dick Peddie, Esq., of Edinburgh; and J. Carvell Williams, Esq., the society's secretary, and the Rev. Alexander Hannay, will attend as a deputation from the Executive Committee."

THE IRISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH.—The Dublin correspondent of the *Times* writes:—"The General Synod of the disestablished Church of Ireland concluded its sittings on Tuesday, after spending fifteen days in its deliberations. It is the shortest session which has yet been held, and has been marked by greater harmony and co-operation than any which preceded it. By mutual concessions on the part of the great body of the members, who were moderate and reasonable, a limited revision of the Prayer-book has been effected, and statutes passed to legalise the changes in the Liturgy. They do not satisfy the extreme parties on both sides—both those who protest against any alterations in the Service and those who would make them more sweeping; but there is a general belief that the Church at large will be content, and that the agitation which has caused so much disquietude and prevented many persons from contributing liberally to its funds will now cease. The malcontents threaten to renew their efforts to obtain further concessions, but they will find their task a very arduous if not hopeless one. A preface has been drawn up which explains the nature and object of the changes that have been made, and this will be prefixed to the new Prayer-book, which will soon be put into the hands of the printer, a committee having been appointed yesterday to superintend the work. The Primate, the Archbishop of Dublin, and the Bishops of Derry and Down resisted to the last the passing of the measures which authorised the alterations, and though they were carried by the requisite majorities of two-thirds of both clergy and laity—the latter being almost unanimous in many instances—they made a last stand against them in the House of Bishops; but, in the final vote, the Bishops of Cashel, Meath, Killaloe, Kilmore, and Ossory took the opposite side, and thus there was a majority of one in favour of what had been done. The four dissentient prelates were not present at the closing scenes, when the bill fixing the time for the revision to take effect was passed after another division by orders at the last stage. The votes in the affirmative were—clergy 94, laity 137, and those against it, clergy 10, laity 3. The relative numbers show how great a preponderance of opinion was in favour of the moderate revision which has been made. Before the Synod broke up, a resolution was passed on the motion of the Bishop of Meath in a conciliatory speech, seconded by Canon Jellett, expressing thankfulness that the dangers which threatened the Church during the revision controversy have been averted, and union and harmony maintained. The whole assembly then joined in chanting the *Te Deum*. It should be stated that the revision statutes will come into force on June 30, 1878."

CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.

(*From our Own Correspondent.*)

The proceedings of the Forty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales commenced on Monday evening with the usual "meeting for business," to which only "representative members" are admitted. It was prefaced by the usual gathering for tea in the Library of the Memorial Hall, which serves admirably for such a purpose, as it affords plenty of room for standing and walking about, and affords a better opportunity for social intercourse than is presented by almost any of the subsequent meetings. And judging from the animation which prevailed, it was thoroughly appreciated; for the talk was never more general, or louder. That was partly the result of the excitement occasioned by the Eastern Question; for news was brought from the House that the Liberal party was now united in support of Mr. Gladstone, and there were many inquiries as to how that had come about. Then a number of members were resolved to go to the meeting at St. James's Hall, and there was some speculation as to the manner in which the question would be dealt with at the meeting of the Union the next morning.

These disturbing influences had an evident effect upon the meeting, and among other results was the absence of the new Chairman, Mr. Richard, M.P., which was apologised for, on the ground that he was remaining at the House to hear Mr. Gladstone. So the late Chairman, Dr. Aveling, was placed in the chair, and his little speech in opening the proceedings was solely about the Eastern Question, on which, he said, it was high time for them to speak out. Then scrutineers for the election of the new committee were appointed, and for the first time, the members generally had an opportunity of choosing from a list nominated by themselves, as well as by the committee. The election of the Chairman for next year followed—the Chairman-elect being the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, who was the only gentleman nominated; an influential list of names being appended to the nomination. Mr. Brown, however, was not present, and so the reading of the report was at once proceeded with.

That document was of a very practical character—dealing with the proposed statistical inquiries into the spiritual condition of the country; the conference of secretaries of county associations; the abandonment of the proposal to take over the *Congregationalist* and *Christian Penny Magazine*; the report of the special committee on intemperance; the "finance scheme," which has been so largely discussed of late; the action of the Union on public questions, and some minor matters. It closed with the usual obituary notices—which paragraph was skilfully written, and, as usual, was confined to ministers, of whom the most conspicuous were the Rev. John Kelly and Dr. Halley.

The resolution adopting the report was briefly moved by the Revs. Messrs. Barrett and Shillito, who, referring to the finance scheme, expressed a hope that they would make haste slowly, and try to secure unanimity. A resolution authorising the calling of another conference to consider over the finance scheme was submitted by the Revs. Messrs. Pearson and Conder; the former expressing approval of the scheme, and the latter speaking with reserve. Then the Rev. J. H. Wilson presented the report of the Memorial Hall Trustees, which stated that the income had exceeded the estimate; but so had the expenses, and the debt was not wholly paid off.

The adoption of these resolutions was a very summary process, a large number of those present wishing to be off to the Eastern Question meeting at St. James's Hall, and others to a Congregational temperance meeting to be held in the same building. Some of the former managed to get into St. James's Hall, but as many, I should think, must have been kept out by the crowd which filled the hall directly it was opened.

Yesterday (Tuesday) morning the members of the Union had to make their way to Westminster Chapel, and perhaps because of the non-central position of that place, there was not the crowding at the commencement witnessed in recent years at the first meeting. The attendance, however, soon became very large, both below and in the first gallery. Mr. Richard was at his post; though he had to include among his regrets the fact that he had a cold, which might prevent his being heard throughout his address. Such, however, was not the case; but, no doubt, it did diminish the force and fire of the speaker's usual delivery, though he was listened to with the most careful attention throughout. He had, he said, occupied the post of Chairman reluctantly, and because it would have been ungracious to refuse; and he spoke feelingly of the distractions and anxieties amid which he had to prepare his address, and which had made its preparation one of the most painful crises of his life.

If anyone expected from Mr. Richard a philippic against the Establishment, well spiced with pungent allusions to recent ecclesiastical incidents, he would be disappointed; for, in the first place, he confined himself to the relations of Church and State on the continent; in order, as he said, to somewhat widen the view of English Nonconformists, by showing the magnitude of the conflict in which they are engaged. It was an address full of solid information, much of which will be new to, or has been forgotten by, Englishmen, and will be read with great interest and much profit. Mr. Richard dealt in succession with France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, and showed the fulness of the information which he has acquired both by foreign travel and from intercourse with public men in Europe. Perhaps the portions of the address which excited most interest were the references to the Falck laws in Germany, and to recent legislative measures in Italy. Mr. Richard, while not professing to speak authoritatively on the important questions raised by such legislation, uttering a word of caution to Nonconformists, by advising them not to favour any violation of the principles of religious liberty, because it might be directed against their theological opponents. The moral of all that he had stated, he thought, was this: "Let no man join together what God had put asunder;" and then he described in forcible and eloquent terms the proper relations of religion to life and to legislation, as well as the mischievous consequences of irreligious State-alliances, and of ill-judged State intervention. Contrasting the results of the opposite policy, he described in glowing terms the religious condition of America, where equality prevails, and where religion flourishes, and religious peace is fully enjoyed. It may be added that, although Mr. Richard is the first lay Chairman of the Congregational Union, he has followed faithfully one of the ministerial traditions; inasmuch as when he sat down—which he did amid hearty and continued plaudits—he had spoken for quite an hour and forty minutes.

The Report of the Special Committee on Intemperance was the next topic—the report having been previously circulated among the members. It is a very carefully-prepared, moderate, and practical document. Very wisely, the committee has not burdened itself with a mass of evidence to prove the existence of widespread intemperance, but has taken the evidence collected by other bodies, and called the attention of its constituency to it, as deserving to be studied with much seriousness. The committee confined its inquiries to one point only, viz., the influence of intemperance on church life and work, and it has succeeded in obtaining as many replies from those whom it addressed as are commonly furnished by Congregationalists; while the facts relate to the most varied classes and conditions of English life. It is satisfactory to find that the popular estimate of the injurious effects of intemperance on the churches is not borne out by the greater portion of the testimony received. But while not a large number of disciplinary cases have arisen from intemperance, it is emphatically stated that it proves a great hindrance in the way of attempts to bring

men within the pale of the church; while it has a greater or less effect in impairing the religious life of many who are professed Christians. With regard to the young, it is stated that the number of those who belong to Christian families who early fall into bad habits is not great; the fall taking place later in life. It is, however, added—and the fact is suggestive—that had the inquiry been extended to youths in Sunday-schools the result would have been most painful, if not appalling. On a further point there is a decided preponderance of opinion—viz, that recovery without total abstinence is rare. There is a weighty passage relative to the separation of masses of the people from Christian influence, as a consequence of the national drink usages, and then follow a number of practical suggestions. Some of the means recommended for adoption are moral only, and some of them have relation to church action exclusively, and will, no doubt, be variously regarded in various quarters. The legislative part of the question is very briefly treated; there being agreement, however, in the opinion that facilities for, and temptations to, drinking should be limited. A few only of the answers favour the Gothenburg plan, and "a few, but a few only, are prepared for prohibition." The committee close by expressing their thankfulness at having had the opportunity, which their appointment has given them, of serving the Congregational churches of England in so important a matter.

The resolution on the subject only commended the report to the consideration of the churches, and was moved by Mr. W. Crosfield, jun., of Liverpool, and seconded by the Rev. W. Cuthbertson. The former went over the main facts of the report; the latter, with greater animation, dealt with the policy of the report, and vindicated it against the misapprehensions which it had occasioned in some quarters. Mr. Morley spoke in his usual emphatic way; declaring that intemperance was a greater obstacle in the way of religion than all other causes put together, and urging the importance of setting the example of earnestness. Mr. Edward Baines spoke as strongly from the same point of view; amid a little impatience, and the Rev. J. H. Wilson could not get a hearing. The Rev. E. Conder moved the addition of a rider to the resolution in favour of a petition for the total closing of public-houses on Sunday, which, to the surprise of some, was carried without any opposition.

The opium-traffic was the next subject, which was introduced by the Rev. J. F. B. Tinling, of Reading, who, as the author of a prize essay on the subject, was able to speak with knowledge, and who also spoke with considerable moral power, as he described the destructive effects of the traffic, and the deep responsibility which rested upon the people of this country. Among other strong things, he said that if England did knowingly what she was doing ignorantly in this matter, he should think as ill of England as of Turkey. The Rev. T. Gilfillan, of Croydon, ably seconded the motion—which urged the adoption of a change in the national policy in the matter, and the adoption of means for forming "an intelligent and religious opinion on the subject." Unfortunately, Mr. Gilfillan was too long, and too persistent in continuing to speak when his time was up, and the meeting, in a fit of impatience, at first refused to hear Dr. Mullens. He, however, briefly spoke, and spoke of both the fascination and the increase of opium-eating. He deprecated the pressure which our Government has put upon the Chinese Government, in its efforts to repress this traffic, but he differed from Mr. Gilfillan in his unfavourable opinion of Indian officials. Mr. Richard, in putting the motion, expressed great gratification that the subject had been introduced; as he had been working at it for five-and-twenty years, and it had been too much ignored.

Of course, the Eastern Question came up; though not till towards the close of the sitting, when it served to revive an interest which had begun to flag. In fact, there had been rumours that the question would reproduce in the Congregational body the difference of opinion which it has occasioned elsewhere in the Liberal ranks. It was intended to have proposed a petition in support of Mr. Gladstone's resolutions, but the change made on the previous night suggested a change of procedure. Mr. Dale—though he did not discuss the question—appeared to view the withdrawal of some of the resolutions with disfavour; though he admitted that what was left of the resolutions would serve the immediate purpose. He regarded as a grave possibility that in a few months we might be fighting on the side of Turkey, for the sake of "British interests," and he looked forward to such an event with "anguish." He expected that Turkey would go from worse to worse, and help given her would aggravate existing evils. He refused to trust the Government, which had failed in all that it professed anxiety to do, and missed the greatest opportunities. He regretted the withdrawal of the third and fourth resolutions, as they contained a positive policy; but thought that gratitude should be expressed for the "magnificent service" Mr. Gladstone had rendered to the nation—a suggestion which was warmly responded to; as was also the further statement that he had been one of the greatest preachers of righteousness in our time. This latest act of his had displayed those moral elements in his character which even more than his genius, secured for him the hearty attachment of Nonconformists. Mr. Dale closed a telling speech by moving a resolution of thanks to Mr. Gladstone.

Dr. Allon seconded it, and said it was a sorrowful thing that the Liberal party should feel a difficulty in following Mr. Gladstone. Prudence was a questionable virtue at such a crisis, and the sentiment of England had gone with Mr. Gladstone rather than his Liberal critics. Dr. Allon, like Mr. Dale, expressed regret at the withdrawal of any of the resolutions. We were bound to say to Turkey, not only "you ought not," but "you *shall* not do so." There was some hesitation when Mr. Allon sat down, but Dr. Raleigh, being called for, briefly spoke, and, among other things, said that much as he dreaded war, there were horrors even worse than those of the battle-field. There were then calls for the Rev. J. G. Rogers, who deprecated the cry of "Peace! peace!" when there was no peace. He also ridiculed the idea that Mr. Gladstone had entered into any compact with Nonconformists in regard to disestablishment; declaring that whenever he chose to promote disestablishment it would be the result of conscientious conviction.

The Chairman's views had been too pointedly alluded to by some of the speakers to allow of his putting the motion without some utterance of his own. He began by saying that he would heartily concur in this resolution of thanks to Mr. Gladstone, though he could not have concurred in the petition it was intended to propose. He referred to what he called the appeals to the belicose spirit of John Bull, and to the tendency of Nonconformists to glorify Oliver Cromwell. He (Mr. R.) preferred to take Jesus Christ and His apostles as his models. Yet no one could condemn more strongly the execrable Government of Turkey than himself, and no one could admire more than he did the splendid services rendered to justice and humanity by Mr. Gladstone. But he wished to remind them that Turkey was as bad in 1854-5 as she is now; and yet then they were all enthusiastic for Turkey, and decried Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, and himself for objecting to the Crimean war. He was delighted with the change which had taken place, but thought those who were so widely wrong then should be a little modest in the expression of warlike views now. It was a very neat thrust. Mr. Newman Hall was not disposed to let the discussion close in that fashion, and so, in a fervid speech, he insisted on the peril of the moment, and exclaimed, "Perish the empire rather than abet oppression," and added, that if we lost character we should lose everything. The Rev. Edward White was even more combative than Mr. Hall; saying that he had never so thoroughly differed from the chairman as he did in regard to the remarks he had just made. He protested against the idea that they were disbelievers in the teachings of Christ and His apostles; and, after referring to some of the unjust wars in which we had been engaged, he said that when war on behalf of a righteous cause was entered upon, they were lectured on peace principles. He hoped that they did not cease to be Englishmen when they became Christians, and that Christianity did not consist in cutting the sinews of the Liberal party. It was a highly provocative speech; but Mr. Richard had the wisdom not to prolong the discussion, and so the resolution was put, and what was felt to be a dangerous discussion came quietly to an end—and the sitting with it.

At the remaining sitting on Friday the burials question is to be dealt with, and papers will be read on the demand for systematic and aggressive work on the part of the churches, and the necessity that the work should be connected with the churches. In the evening there is to be a public meeting for the enforcement of Free Church principles.

The forty-seventh annual meetings of the Congregational Union commenced on Monday, when a large number of members assembled at the Memorial Hall. Tea was served previous to the meeting in the large hall. In the absence of Mr. H. Richard, M.P., who was detained at the House of Commons by the important debate on the Eastern Question, the Rev. Dr. Aveling, ex-Chairman of the Union, took the chair. After devotional exercises, the CHAIRMAN said he was sure the assembly would excuse Mr. Richard of any neglect of his duty in not being present that evening, and thoroughly endorse what he (Mr. Richard) was doing in standing side by side with their great leader, the man—(cheers)—who, alone of all the statesmen of this land, seemed to understand the position which England ought to occupy in relation to the Eastern Question. Their friend, for such he was, was that night giving renewed expression to the conviction which the country had long felt, and had not ceased to feel. (Cheers.) If they had been quiet, it had not been the quietness of death or indifference, but because they wished to give fair play to all. It was time that silence should cease, for silence now would be sin. Those who had travelled on steamboats had seen a notice requesting them not to speak to the man at the wheel. They had kept silence to see what the man at the helm would do; but if the man at the helm was blind or sleepy—(cheers)—if he could not discern the foam of the breakers, then they might not be silent or cease to speak, but lift up their voices, as he was glad to see they were being raised now. (Cheers.)

On the motion of the Rev. A. HANNAY, scrutineers were appointed to examine the ballot papers for appointment of committee, and Mr. Hannay said he had to ask counsel of the Assembly as to seven ballot papers which had been sent to him by post, and which he did not feel at liberty to deposit in the ballot-box as votes without the sanction of the Assembly. A member proposed that the votes be not accepted this year, which was seconded and carried, as was also another motion to remit the general question of voting by proxy to the general committee.

Mr. B. A. HANNAY stated that the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown had been nominated as chairman for 1878 by a number of representative members, and the chairman having put the proposal to the assembly, it was carried by an overwhelming majority, there being only two dissentients.

THE ANNUAL REPORT.

The Rev. A. HANNAY then read the report, which commenced by referring to the steps taken in pursuance of the resolution adopted at the last annual meeting, requesting the committees of the several county associations to make inquiries within their respective bounds in regard to the spiritual condition of the people, more particularly in villages and thinly-peopled districts. In accordance with this resolution, a conference of the secretaries and treasurers of county associations was held in the Memorial Hall on March 7. A thoughtful paper was read by the Rev. Goodeve Mabbs, of Chesterfield, on the principles and methods of inquiry which, in his judgment, must be adopted in order to obtain true statistics of the accommodation provided for religious worship and teaching in England. The plan sketched in this paper, practically illustrated as it has been by the invaluable work prepared and published by Mr. Mabbs on the religious accommodation of Derbyshire, was regarded by the Conference as appropriate to return more comprehensive and elaborate than it would be wise for any one religious denomination to undertake, and resolutions were passed urging the officers of each county and district to undertake the work, and appointing a small sub-committee to prepare questions on the subject. It was also reported that the committee, with the view of carrying out suggestions made at Bradford, had decided that there should be a private conference of secretaries of county associations on the Friday morning of the week of each autumnal session, and that clerical expenses should be paid. It is believed that much advantage must accrue to the churches from the frequent meeting in council of those who are chiefly responsible for the working of their county organisations. The report went on to state that no further steps had been taken as to transferring the *Congregationalist* and *Christian Penny Magazine* to the Union, and that the trustees of the *Christian Witness* fund had also withdrawn their proposal to the same effect. It was reported that the committee, in accordance with the wishes of the Union, had adopted a bye-law to the effect that nominations for the committee should be received up to the 15th of March, and that no paper should contain more than one name. Also that the report of the special committee on intemperance would be presented to the Assembly. The next subject dealt with was the scheme of the finance conference, and it was reported that, as had been arranged, some twenty-four conferences in connection with county associations had been held attended by members of the committee, with the view of promoting a thorough discussion of the subject, and it was unofficially stated that twenty of these were favourable and four unfavourable to the scheme of the committee. On this important question we extract the following passage from the report:—

Although unanimity of judgment has not been reached, much progress seems to have been made towards such unanimity, while an earnestness of feeling has been evoked, and there has been revealed a common sense of the need of larger and more united efforts on the part of the churches in their service of one another, which together promise that, whatever form the ultimate decision may take, it will surely tend to the further

development of the resources of the churches for home service. (Hear, hear.) The committee will continue, in so far as it may be needed, the service which it has been rendering during the past six months, and do what is possible to it in furthering the discussion; but in its judgment the time has come when there should be closer conference on the part of those who, taking a deep interest in the general question, yet take diverse view on some of the leading proposals of the Conference. Conference has already been had with representatives of the Home Missionary Society. In addition to this it has been arranged on the part of the committee to add to their number the following names, chiefly of gentlemen representing views different in some respects from those which are set forth in the scheme, namely:—S. Morley, Esq., M.P., G. W. Knox, Esq., W. Armitage, Esq., G. Hanley Wood, Esq., W. G. Soper, Esq., and Revs. J. H. Wilson, Thomas Robinson, B.A., Sept. March, B.A., R. Bruce, M.A., W. Hewgill, M.A., R. M. Davies, E. J. Hartland. The proposal is that the enlarged committee should meet on an early day to consider the whole question in the light of the returns from the counties, which by that time will be nearly completed, and that the Assembly should be asked to give power to the committee, should it believe that thereby more rapid and equally sure progress might be made towards a harmonious settlement, to summon another Conference of delegates of county associations, say in the month of September. Meanwhile the committee deeply feel that it becomes all on whose judgment or action the decision of this weighty matter in any degree depends, to make it the subject of much patient and prayerful thought. The times in which we live are loudly calling on the Free Churches of England to prepare themselves for a higher service in the kingdom of Christ than any which their history, honourable as it is, records. The near future will probably test the stuff of which English Nonconformists are made as it has never been tested since the days of their great progenitors. It were a trifling little worthy the traditions of Congregationalism to propose to meet the great opportunities and trials which are visibly opening by mere expedients of organisation or tricks of management. (Hear, hear.) Congregationalism owes the good degree which it has purchased to itself to the moral influence of its teaching, and of the spiritual life which has been engendered and trained in its churches, to the prominence which it has given to the responsibility of the individual Christian man in all that concerns the service and order of the kingdom of Christ; and to the jealousy with which it has guarded the rightful liberties of the faithful, alike against the interference of the civil power, the pretensions of official arrogance, and the undue pressure of opinion, and of established methods of procedure within its own pale. Its strength for the future must lie where its strength in the past has lain. But it may be a question whether, in the future, more may not be made of its strength for the service of the Gospel and of its own principles of Church organisation than has been made in the past, by such closer association for counsel and mutual aid as experience or the new circumstances of the day suggest; yet always only such as is in harmony with its free Christian genius. (Hear, hear.) Congregationalism devolves grave responsibilities upon its sons. Among other things it requires them in each successive generation to take the management of the affairs of Christ's house into their own hands. It places the Book, authoritative as to principles, open before them, but leaves them to interpret it, and to consider and determine for themselves how the fixed laws of the Head are to be adapted in administration to the new, it may be much changed, conditions of society. And in any given age, Congregationalism will—always supposing a full and true Christian life—be able to serve Christ and the nation well, just in the proportion in which it faithfully and wisely performs this duty. (Cheers.) It is the conviction of many among us that we cannot rightly do our part in the present if we rely implicitly on the methods which rendered such good service in the days of our fathers: hence the discussions which are enlivening the meetings of our county associations; but it is the universal feeling that we cannot afford to divide over new proposals—(Hear, hear)—and the earnest desire and effort of the committee therefore is to secure such a thorough, even though it should be somewhat protracted, discussion of the questions now in debate as is most likely to lead to efficiency in new plans, and to unity of feeling and action in carrying them out. (Cheers.)

After some reference to the usual interchange of courtesies between the Union and the sister Unions of Scotland and Ireland, the report states that this year's Congregational lecture will be deferred to October, when Rev. E. R Conder, M.A., will lecture on "The Bases of Faith"; next year the J. G. Rogers, B.A., will undertake the lecture; and in the succeeding year the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, B.A. The sale of the lectures had been very satisfactory, and during the year 122,986 of the hymn-book had been disposed of. The report goes on to refer to the action taken by the committee on various public questions, such as the Bulgarian atrocities, the Education Bill of 1876, the Government Burials Bill—on all of which the resolutions duly appeared in our columns—mentions the appointment of seven representatives to the recent Liberation Conference, and concludes by a suitable allusion to the deaths of well-known Congregationalists during the past year, including Dr. Halley, Dr. Unwin, Dr. Rawson, and the Revs. John Kelly, Clement Dukes, Joseph Fletcher, W. Kingland, G. W. Robinson, E. Muscutt, and John Sibree. Cheers followed the reading of the report.

The balance-sheet was then presented, the receipts being 1,389*l.* 16s. 4d., and the expenses the same amount.

The Rev. G. S. BARRETT, B.A., of Norwich, moved a resolution adopting the report appointing committee and officers, and thanking the committee for their services during the past year He thought the Union would agree with him in thinking that a more interesting report had seldom been presented. One of the statements contained in it was that the finance committee had associated with themselves other gentlemen whose views on the finance scheme were not the same as theirs, and he was very glad to see amongst them the name of Mr. Morley. Some of them had disagreed with Mr. Morley on some public questions, but as a body they owed him a large debt of gratitude for the interest he had taken in the work of evangelising the country, and for the munificent contributions he had made from his purse. He should be glad if the union of those gentlemen led to the adoption of some scheme which would unite all their churches. He thought it would be disastrous if they adopted that scheme even with a majority. They wanted a strong feeling of unanimity amongst all their churches, and if any scheme promoted that they would all rejoice when it was adopted. (Hear, hear.) There was one very grave omission from the report. He did not think they ought to separate without some expression of their opinion as to their indebtedness as a union to their secretary for his self-denying advocacy of that scheme. (Hear, hear.) They might differ respecting it, but they all owed him a debt of gratitude for the statesmanlike way in which he had laid the scheme before the county unions. (Cheers.)

The Rev. WILLIAM SHILLITO seconded the resolution, and in relation to the finance scheme said he agreed with what had been said that they must make haste slowly.

THE FINANCE SCHEME.

The Rev. S. PEARSON, M.A., of Liverpool, moved a resolution empowering the special finance committee to summon a representative conference to consider anew the scheme of a finance board. He was heartily in favour of the finance scheme as it now existed, and the rapid growth of opinion in its favour led him to hope that it would be adopted before the millennium. He agreed with the former speaker, that they ought to cordially co-operate with each other. The great feature of the resolution was that the finance committee should call together those who held diverse opinions, and no doubt when their heads were put together they would be able to find some *via media* which they might all accept. (Hear, hear.) He agreed that they should "make haste slowly;" but he hoped the committee would not think they had more than twelve months to consider the subject, that they would bring before them a scheme which the vast majority of their churches would accept—as a workable scheme. (Cheers.)

The Rev. EUSTACE CONDER, M.A., of Leeds, said they would require, if not infallibility, miraculous powers, to produce a scheme which should please all. He seconded the resolution because he could not say that he was thoroughly in favour of the scheme in its present form, and he felt that there should be a real approach to unanimity. At their own gathering in Yorkshire there was such a division of opinion that the chairman had to call in Dr. Mellor to count hands. That difference of opinion existed, and while some of them were most anxious to see the scheme carried out, there should be a most thorough and honest exchange of views on the subject in the hope that some plan would be produced in which they could all join heart and hand. He hoped there would be no fighting for particular opinions, but that they would all unite in carrying out the plan adopted. (Cheers.)

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

THE MEMORIAL HALL.

The Rev. J. H. WILSON then read the third report of the trustees of the Memorial Hall, in which reference was made to the library, and some improvements which were being carried out. It was stated that the Rev. Dr. Newth had accepted the office of honorary librarian, and that 8,000 vols. and 2,000 vols. of pamphlets had been placed therein. Dr. Newth had selected, classified, and catalogued them. They represented a very valuable body of Nonconformist literature. To Mr. Wilson the committee returned their thanks, which the Union would, he knew, endorse. The income had exceeded the original estimate, but the expenses were beyond it, £500 being paid for rates and taxes alone. The committee felt satisfied that if the Congregational Union would strengthen their hands, the time would not be far distant when friends would come forward and clear away the balance of debt remaining on the building. Mr. HENRY WRIGHT moved a resolution appointing Mr. Jas. Spicer, J.P., treasurer, Mr. Hannay secretary, and Messrs. Devitt and Jones auditors, and spoke of each of those gentlemen in complimentary terms. The Rev. WILLIAM ROBERTS seconded the resolution, which was adopted.

The Rev. A. HANNAY said the scrutineers had not been able to complete their tasks, and therefore the result of the ballot for the committee would be announced at next days meeting.

Mr. GRIMWADE, of Ipswich, having proposed thanks to the chairman, the meeting was closed with the benediction.

The first public session of the Union was held at Westminster Chapel yesterday morning at half-past nine. After a devotional service, the Chairman for the year, Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., took the chair. There was a very large attendance of delegates in the body of the chapel. The upper galleries were also well filled with the general public. Amongst those present were the Rev. Dr. Raleigh, the Rev. Dr. Mellor, the Rev. Dr. Aveling, the Rev. Dr. Allon, the Rev. Newman Hall, Sir Charles Reed, Mr. S. Morley, M.P., Mr. E. Jenkins, M.P., Mr. Edward Baines, the Rev. A. Hannay, Mr. W. Crosfield, jun., Mr. W. R. Dale, the Rev. W. Cuthbertson, the Rev. J. F. B Tinling, the Rev. T. Gilfillan, &c.

The CHAIRMAN then delivered his inaugural address, the greater part of which will be found in our Supplement. It was received with cordial applause.

REFERENCE COMMITTEE.

The Rev. A. HANNAY announced that the following gentlemen had been selected as the Reference Committee:—Mr. James Scrutton, Mr. F. J. Hartley, Mr. E. Grimwade, Mr. Isaac Briggs, the Rev. A. Thomson, the Rev. Dr. Mellor, and the Rev. Dr. Raleigh.

COMMITTEE.

The Rev. A. HANNAY stated that the scrutineers had made up the ballot of the preceding evening, and the committee had been selected. The rev. gentleman then read the names.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTEMPERANCE.

The Rev. A. HANNAY said the special committee appointed on the subject of intemperance had made a report which had already been printed and circulated, and therefore there would be no necessity to read it.

Mr. WILLIAM CROSFIELD then moved the following resolution on the report, namely:—

That the Assembly, regarding the Report of the Special Committee on Intemperance as a document of great importance, commends it to the candid and prayerful consideration of the churches, and instructs the committee to take such steps as may be necessary to bring it directly under their notice.

He rejoiced that the eloquent appeal made at the Bradford assembly had resulted in the appointment of a committee. The committee was composed of sixteen gentlemen selected in equal proportions from the two parties holding opposite opinions upon the question. A consideration of the report itself would show the justice of the selection, and the report now submitted would, he hoped, be regarded as a very moderate one. Owing to the large amount of valuable evidence collected by the two Houses of Convocation, the statistics collected by magistrates, judges, governors of gaols, superintendents of lunatic asylums, and others, it was thought unnecessary to make any further inquiry on the general subject, and to confine the report to the condition of the churches of their own order in relation to it. This was done by means of a series of questions addressed to the ministers. The first part of the report dealt with the subject of the discipline exercised in the churches, and the second part with the results of the intemperance. It appeared from answers that such discipline had been exercised in 243 cases, and not exercised in 215. As to the question whether members had lapsed through intemperance without discipline, there were 192 yeas and 183 nays. In reply to the question whether intemperance was a common cause of defection, there were 163 yeas and 211 noes. On the question whether a moderate though not an intemperate use of intoxicating drinks has resulted in a hindrance to spiritual life, 340 answers were "Yes" and 147 "No." On the question whether it had been observed that youths of Christian families had fallen away through intemperance, there were 67 yeas and 380 nays. The next question, whether reform apart from total abstinence had been observed, received 25 affirmative and 397 negative replies. These were the largest numbers of answers ever received in reply to any inquiry except that in regard to Sunday-schools three years ago. The character of the answers appeared less encouraging than it really was. It must be remembered that the statistics were not those of drunkenness generally, but of intemperance solely with regard to their own churches. The general tone of the answers showed that absolute intemperance was making inroads into the life of the churches notwithstanding the rigid barriers erected against it. The large number of 340 answers in the affirmative that the habitual moderate use of intoxicating drinks was a hindrance to spiritual life was very formidable, and it would be seen that there was almost a unanimous opinion that any reformation from drunkenness was to be ascribed to total abstinence. The suggestions with which the report closed were the practical result of the endeavours to consider in what way this Union could most effectually aid in promoting the temperance reformation. The first recommendation was that each individual church should carefully and prayerfully consider the report. It was proposed that temperance should form the subject of simultaneous sermons to be preached throughout the land. There might be objections to this being done partially, but it was thought it would be done willingly when it was known that the whole body would co-operate. In order to check the habit of all classes of holding meetings in public-houses, it was advisable that the loan of schoolrooms should be offered with that object wherever practicable. A further recommendation of the committee dealt with the question of legislation, more especially with repect to the increase of licensed houses, and the demoralising connection between public-houses and places of amusement. It urged the general and more stringent carrying out of the existing laws with regard to licensed houses. The report further advocated the formation of temperance societies, to the advantage of which organisations ample testimony was adduced. There were already Congregational temperance associations, which would do better work if their sphere was enlarged. The question of popular amusements was considered as closely connected with intemperance. The report further detailed the most recent evidence which had been obtained on

the subject of alcohol by Dr. Richardson, who had pursued the subject with such enthusiasm as might almost lay him open to the charge of fanaticism. But his deductions had been confirmed by men of eminence such as Dr. Acland, Dr. Rolleston, Dr. Parkes, Sir Benjamin Brodie, Sir Henry Thompson, and Dr. Gull. In many cases, however, no amount of lecturing would have any effect, but it would be necessary that a helping hand should be held out to the drunkard. He would ask whether this question did not concern every one present? It had been supposed that alcohol was of use in cases of severe strain, whether of bodily labour or of brain work; but there were the most striking illustrations of endurance in respect to both without its use. In conclusion, the speaker contended that the whole existence of their churches, and the spiritual life and prosperity of their members, depended upon the eradication of this monstrous evil. (Cheers.)

The Rev. W. CUTHBERTSON, of Bishops Stortford, in seconding the resolution, said it was the wish of the committee that the report should receive a prayerful consideration, and that there should come out of it some real action, not going to extremes on one side, but that at least Christian men and Christian churches should fairly consider their duty in relation to this great question. There would be no difference, he thought, as to this being an important question, and it was great enough to call for all their width of thought and for the exercise of all their Christian spirit. If they could get thorough accord of opinion on this subject, they would be doing one of the greatest things they could do for the advancement of the kingdom of God on this earth. It would be a subject for consideration what they had done in the past and what they could do in the future, and he thought it would be a very good text upon which to preach sermons as to the action to be taken. There would be very little difference of opinion as to the closing on the Lord's Day of all public-houses and beershops, and they would all be for the limitation of the hours during which liquor could be sold, and for the suppression of music-halls and dancing-rooms, which were among the greatest curses of the land. There would also be united in opinion as to the necessity of the inspection of licensed houses for the purpose of seeing that the present laws were properly carried out. Another point to be considered was the improvement in the sanitary condition of the homes of the poor and the purification of their amusements, and if the church would take up that question they would do great service. (Cheers.)

Mr. SAMUEL MORLEY, M.P., said he was thankful to be able to stand up and support this resolution. He did not wish to use intemperate language to those who differed with him, but he could not look upon the discussion of this question in this assembly without recognising the immense influence they might exercise throughout England. He did not profess to know more of the condition of the poor than any gentleman present, but it had been his study to gather some impressions as to the condition of the cottages of the poor, and he was prepared to say that that point needed the influence of men who at present stood aloof from it. A memorial had been presented by 14,000 of the clergy of the Established Church, which had led to the appointment of a committee of the House of Lords on intemperance, and he should like to have seen a memorial from 14,000 Nonconformist ministers presented to the House of Commons with the same view, and then probably a committee of the Commons would have joined the House of Lords in their investigations. The members of that Union had not only an influence over the working classes, but over a vast number of the middle classes, amongst whom he had a great fear that the late commercial prosperity had led to much luxury. He believed that the drinking habits of the latter class were largely on the increase, although he was not aware that there was any increase in what was known as brutal drunkenness. He would urge upon the advocates of temperance that if they preached total abstinence they must themselves, as he did, totally abstain. They must practise what they preached, and become examples to others. (Hear, hear.) Many years ago he was challenged, when advocating temperance, as to whether he was a total abstainer, and he was obliged to confess that he was not, but he made up his mind that from that hour he would become a total abstainer; and, although he was one of the hardest-worked men in London, he found that he wanted nothing stronger than good, honest water. (Hear, hear.) This question of temperance would be found to be a great power in their ministry, if they were earnest on the subject. He had presented nearly 8,000 copies of the sermon by the Rev. Basil Wilberforce, entitled "Sound an Alarm!" which was a noble appeal to the patriotism and citizenship of Englishmen, and he commended the pamphlet to all present. (Cheers.)

The Rev. EUSTACE CONDER observed that the report was eminently practical and fair, both in its statements and suggestions, and as the question of Sunday closing had been mentioned, he wished to say a petition had been prepared on the subject, and he would like the chairman to sign it in the name of the meeting, and he would simply move a rider to the resolution authorising that the petition be signed in the manner he had suggested. (Cheers.)

Mr. EDWARD BAINES, in seconding the proposal of Mr. Conder, said, as a member of the committee, he must assure the meeting that the report was an honest one, and they might read it over and over again with absolute confidence in its truthfulness, impartiality, and candour. He rejoiced to know that the Union had resolved, in imitation of other Christian bodies, to ally the great principles of religion with those of temperance, believing as he did the spirit and precept of the Gospel to be the strongest means which could be employed in putting down the greatest scourge of this country, the greatest sin and the greatest enemy to religion, education, morality, and public prosperity and happiness. (Cheers.) Almost every religious denomination already had its temperance societies, which were doing active work. There was a great error prevalent among a few persons that total abstainers seemed to put total abstinence in the place of spiritual religion, without considering that it was a fatal error to do so, but in his opinion it was a very great mistake to suppose that that fatal error prevailed to any appreciable extent. (Hear, hear.) To show that it was a great mistake to suppose that there was anything in total abstinence to prejudice persons against receiving religion, he might draw attention to a pamphlet issued by Miss Sarah Robinson, the founder of the Soldiers' Institute at Portsmouth, entitled, "Christianity and Teetotalism; a Voice from the Army." That lady was at the head of all the temperance associations of the army, which included between 10,000 and 11,000 men, 7,000 of whom were with our army in India, where the temptations were exceedingly great. She said in a passage in her pamphlet:—

> In the army total abstinence goes hand-in-hand with religion. I do not say that every abstainer is a Christian, but it is a matter of course among soldiers that every Christian should be a total abstainer. I have met only two who were not, and the exception proves the rule.

Similar evidence was given by Miss Weston, of Devonport, founder of the Sailors' Home there, and of total abstinence societies in 130 of the Queen's ships, numbering no less than 7,000 members. He (Mr. Baines) was a decided total abstainer, and, although he treated with every respect those who conscientiously differed from him, yet he saw no chance of effecting the object they all had in view except by going to the root of the evil and suppressing the liquor traffic by means of the spread of total abstinence opinions.

The resolution, with the petition, was then adopted.

THE OPIUM TRAFFIC.

The Rev. J. F. B. TINLING (Reading), moved:—

> That the Assembly deplores the continuance, up to the present time, of the opium trade with China, and regarding it, even in its legalised form, as a grievous wrong to that country, and most injurious to the reputation of Great Britain, as seriously hindering the work of Christian missions, restraining the natural development of commerce, and tending to foster in the minds of the Chinese Government a spirit of resentment, is of opinion that a change in English policy in regard to it is urgently needed, and that the Ministers and other representatives of the Congregational Churches should endeavour to bring about such a change by using their influence for the formation of an intelligent and righteous public opinion on the subject.

He hoped the Union would join in unanimously and emphatically condemning the immorality of the opium trade. Four hundred millions of Chinese were suffering from this traffic. The East India Company commenced the traffic, but since 1834 the English were responsible for its continuance, and in 1868 it was legalised. Three wars had arisen out of the traffic, which was slowly destroying the political, social, and moral capacities of the Chinese. One means by which the difficulty might be met in India would be by the encouragement of irrigation which would produce such a change in India, and avoid all the disastrous famines, that the Government would no longer want the present revenue derived from the opium cultivation. If they were to have sermons on intemperance, why not have sermons on this subject also?

The Rev. G. GILFILLAN (Croydon), in seconding the resolution, said he was more a witness than an advocate. In 1848, fresh from college and enthusiastic for the conversion of China, he went out and found on arriving there an enemy to the Gospel, more potent than scholastic Confucianism and idolatrous Bhuddism, in the deadly drug which was destroying the Chinese body and soul. It was appalling to find that under the flag of England, the symbol of freedom and right, the smuggling of the drug was going on, with the result of poisoning myriads of Chinese. If he ventured to speak out on the subject there, he was met by the frown of the venerable or the scowl of the stern British merchant. He could not, and did not now, understand why on this question the word should be "mum!" if anyone wished to be thought a pleasant fellow. He had visited the opium-smoking dens and seen terrible sights, a hundred times worse than those which resulted from gin-drinking in this country. No language could exaggerate its evil. It crippled our legitimate commerce, it swept its victims by myriads into an untimely grave, it embittered the whole of the Chinese against the English, and was an obstacle to the path of the missionary.

The Rev. Dr. MULLENS, in supporting the resolution, said that in taking up this question they were dealing with a matter which ran thoroughly parallel with the question of intemperance in this country. In China the evil was a mighty one; the fascination of opium-smoking being so great, that no one who began the habit could ever leave it off. The habit was gaining ground amongst the literati and scholars, and also among the official world. There were two points to which attention ought to be given: what could be done in China? and what could we do in India? By the treaties with China, the liberty of China to deal with the question was gone; and he thought the House of Commons should be distinctly petitioned, that when an opportunity offered to revise the treaties, liberty should be given to the Chinese to deal with this question as the Chinese Government thought best. In regard to India, Lord Lawrence and Sir William Muir had acknowledged that the present relations between the Indian Government and the production of opium could not be defended. The trade began with the East India Company, and had been inherited by the Government, and the point to be urged on the Government would be that it should retire as soon as possible from its connection with the opium production, and put it on the same footing as the manufacture of whisky in this country. (Cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN, in putting the resolution, said the Government had admitted that the opium traffic was immoral, and the public must see that the Government did not put finance above morality. (Hear, hear.)

The resolution was then carried.

SYMPATHY WITH MR. GLADSTONE.

Mr. R. W. DALE, M.A., of Birmingham, then moved:—

> That this meeting records its high appreciation of the noble and courageous devotion to the cause of righteousness and freedom and generous self-sacrifice and chivalrous spirit which has characterised the action of the Hon. W. E. Gladstone in relation to the Eastern policy of this country; and at the same time rejoices in the influence he has exerted in eliciting so unparalleled a manifestation of public opinion against any attempt to lend the moral or material support of this nation to a despotism guilty of the crimes which have disgraced the Government of Turkey, and which must discredit its allies.

He said that that resolution had been substituted for the petition to the House of Commons which stood on the agenda, in consequence of the proceedings in the House of Commons on the previous evening. He did not know the reasons which led Mr. Gladstone to withdraw half of the resolutions he had put down on the paper, and he was quite sure that if Mr. Gladstone had retained the whole of the resolutions he would have received a large measure of support from the country. (Hear, hear.) The two resolutions that now remained simply pledged them to this—that Turkey had lost all claim on the material or moral support of this country. Doubtless it was a great matter to bring the whole of the Liberal party to that point, but, in saying that, they were pronouncing by implication one of the heaviest possible censures that could be pronounced on any great political section of this country. (Hear, hear.) It was a humiliation, and perhaps a surprise, that the Liberal party had consented to take that position, but Mr. Gladstone seemed to attach immense importance to committing the whole party to that point. The Resolutions, however, in their present form would meet an immediate possible danger—(Hear, hear)—because, notwithstanding what Mr. Cross might say, the reply of Lord Derby to the Russian Circular justified honest anxiety and alarm with regard to the course the Government were likely to pursue. (Applause.) Mr. Cross had repudiated on the part of the Government any claim of Turkey upon our material or moral support; but that did not remove our apprehensions, because during the Crimean war it was then said that Turkey had no claim upon us, and it was alleged that the reason why we fought was to protect our own interests in the East; and if we were to find ourselves fighting again by the side of Turkey, no doubt the same reasons would be given for such a course. But he should look forward to such a possibility with the very deepest dismay and honest anguish when he remembered the appalling story of Turkish cruelty and oppression—(cheers)—which roused England last autumn and filled the whole country with the fiercest indignation. He could conceive no deeper humiliation coming upon this country than being compelled, in support of its own interests, to perpetuate such a despotism as that of Turkey. No man who ever travelled in any part of Turkey came home with any other feeling than that of profound disgust and indignation at the crimes of the Turkish Government. But it was no new thing for Turkey to be guilty of such oppression. After the Crimean war closed there were hopes of reform in the administration of Turkey; but, although more than twenty years had passed by, our hopes had not been fulfilled, and he must be amongst the most credulous of mankind who would suppose that the present Government of Turkey had more energy to accomplish those reforms than its predecessors. He was convinced that the condition of Turkey must go on from worse to worse, and that some day the catastrophe must come; and that consequently any government which lent support to Turkey would only delay that catastrophe and still further aggravate the present condition of things in the meantime. With every disposition to cherish a faith in some members of the present Government he found it impossible to place confidence in their administration as a whole. All their intentions with regard to averting the present war and securing guarantees for the better government of the Christian subjects of Turkey had been frustrated, and opportunities had been neglected. One of the greatest opportunities the Government had was missed and lost when it refused

to take part with the great Powers of Europe in the concerted action proposed in the Berlin Memorandum. He sympathised with the chairman in desiring to determine international disputes by arbitration instead of war; but in order to do that there must be an international police to enforce that arbitration, When the Berlin Memorandum proposed a course the Government shrank from it. With regard to Mr. Gladstone's resolutions he deeply regretted that the whole of the Liberal party could not commit itself to them — (great cheering)—because, whilst the first two Resolutions told the Government what they ought not to do, they gave no ray of hope to the miserable victims of Turkish oppression, whereas the third and fourth resolutions indicated a positive policy. (Hear, hear.) But whatever their opinion might be with regard to these Resolutions they ought to express their gratitude and admiration for the magnificent services which Mr. Gladstone has rendered to the country. (Great cheering.) He believed that Mr. Gladstone had been one of the greatest preachers of righteousness that God ever sent, and that his Christian fellow-men were bound to recognise what he had done for the kingdom of Heaven by appealing to the conscience of the nation to clear itself from all complicity with the crimes of which the Turkish Government had been guilty. Whilst he admired the magnificent genius of Mr. Gladstone, he almost forgot that genius in the simplicity and courage with which he had consecrated himself to a great moral object; and in the services which he has just rendered he had manifested, if possible, more nobly than ever before, those moral and religious elements which, beyond his genius, constitute the secret of the power that he exercises over the hearts of his fellow countrymen. (Loud cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. ALLON, in seconding the resolution, said the voice of warning uttered throughout the country, and which Mr. Gladstone had lifted in the simple cause of righteousness, had done more than all the diplomacy of Governments could achieve, and we were bound to honour Mr. Gladstone, because he had spoken in utter disregard of all personal considerations. He had not been retarded by considerations of consistency, but had done that which he thought right under the circumstances in which we are placed, whilst the sentiments of England had responded to his appeal with an intensity such as rarely, if ever before, had been exhibited in the history of our country. He regretted, however, that Mr. Gladstone had been induced by any considerations whatever to modify his Resolutions. (Loud cheers.) It was not only necessary to express our intense disapprobation of the misrule of Turkey so far as the Christian provinces were concerned, but it was equally essential that we should avow our determination to use all means that might be wisely and righteously practicable to secure for those provinces a better administration in the future. Mr. Cross ventured to say on the previous evening that the public meetings in this country had been got up by some occult machinery which he imagined to exist, but of which no one else ever heard. As far as he (Dr. Allon) knew, the feeling of the last week had been as spontaneous as the feeling which was exhibited in the autumn of last year. We had a right to say, with Mr. Gladstone, that the wrongs which Turkey had inflicted upon her Christian provinces should come to an end. We had a moral right and a political right to say so, but that did not imply that we were in some Quixotic way to be the redressers of all the wrongs of all the governments in the world. We were bound to interfere in this case of the Turks by considerations which were special and urgent. In the first place, our conduct during the Crimean war had helped to give power to Turkey to continue the wrong she had committed, and in the next place, at the conclusion of the Crimean war, Turkey entered into direct stipulation with England and France that she would do justice to her Christian populations; therefore we had a perfect right to insist that the present misgovernment should cease. (Hear, hear.)

The Rev. Dr. RALEIGH, in supporting the resolution, said he was perfectly sure that there would be no permanent peace in Europe until we had gone to the root of all this trouble and disease. The trouble began in Turkey; and not in Russia, and it continued in Turkey, and where the disease was, there must the cure be worked. (Hear, hear.) So long as the present state of things continued there could not be peace. It might be called peace, but he called it war—war of the worst kind—(Hear, hear)—and when they contemplated horrors like these running along through the ages, there was a sense of relief even in the terrors and the horrors of the battle-field, because there was some hope that out of the latter better things might some day come.

The Rev. J. G. ROGERS expressed his earnest sympathy with the resolution, and cleared away some of the misapprehensions with regard to the action of the Nonconformists on this question. They were not allied with Mr. Gladstone because they expected any help from him on another great question—that of disestablishment. They knew Mr. Gladstone too well to suppose that he would for a moment purchase the support of the united Nonconformists of England—(Hear, hear)—but, when the proper time came Mr. Gladstone would undoubtedly disestablish the Church if he lived. (Cheers.) When the conviction came on Mr. Gladstone that it was the right thing to do he would do it, but no support of the Nonconformists would induce him to speak a single word or take a single step till that time came. (Hear, hear.) The fact was Mr. Gladstone's conduct had touched the hearts of Nonconformists as no other statesman had ever done before—(Hear, hear)—and that was the reason they rendered to him their hearty loyalty. (Cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN said that he thought a little unfair advantage had been taken of him. (Laughter.) It would necessarily be supposed he should say something of peace, but in this feverish atmosphere—(laughter)—and with the bellicose propensities of John Bull around him, he thought it was not a very favourable opportunity for the "still small voice" of peace to be heard. (Renewed laughter.) There was a little disposition in English assemblies to glorify Oliver Cromwell, but he preferred to take Jesus Christ as his model. (Hear, hear.) He believed that Christ and His apostles did a far nobler and more lasting work than Oliver Cromwell and his Ironsides, and it was a little surprising in a Christian assembly like this how the memory and spirit and principles of Jesus Christ were put aside so easily. (Cries of "No, no.") He was happy, however, to be able to put this resolution with cordial concurrence in its sentiments. No man could condemn more than he did the execrable Government of the Turk; but these Turkish atrocities were no new revelation to him, because twenty-five years ago he published a pamphlet, in which he endeavoured to persuade his countrymen that in fighting the battles of Turkey they were fighting for brutality, barbarism, and blood. (Cheers.) The atrocities of Bulgaria were insignificant compared to the atrocities of Scio, where in ten days 40,000 Greek men, women, and children, perished by sword and by fire; and where 7,000 who had fled to the mountains and came back under the promise of amnesty, guaranteed by England, France, and Austria, were every one butchered by the Turks. But all the excitement which prevailed now against Turkey was nothing in comparison with the fury and enthusiasm that existed on behalf of Turkey twenty-five years ago. Lord Palmerston then declared that no country in the world had made such progress as Turkey in the previous thirty years, and the people believed him, and would listen to no one who lifted up his voice on the other side. He was delighted to see a change now. But what did England gain by the Crimean war? It cost a million of human lives, and the only thing gained was to prolong the power of Turkey to afflict its Christian subjects. Therefore those who went so wildly into that war, ought to be a little modest now when people were looking forward to another. (Cheers.) While approving this resolution, he could not have approved one endorsing the whole of Mr. Gladstone's resolutions, because he believed they would have committed the country to a policy which would have thrown the whole Turkish Empire in a state of anarchy upon our hands. It would have involved a military occupation, and the undertaking of its whole administration, which would be a gigantic task, and enough to make anyone fall back from it in dismay. But this resolution expressed admiration for what Mr. Gladstone had done, and so far he cordially concurred in it.

The Rev. NEWMAN HALL said be was ashamed to say he was one of those who went with the popular tide in the Crimean War, but he had become a penitent. It might be also that Mr. Gladstone had some regret for that war, though he might be able to justify it by the highest political reasons. But for that war Turkey would have fallen to the ground. Let the delegates, on their return to the country, hold meetings in every parish, and whatever opinions they might express on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions, let them declare that on no consideration whatever should this country engage in war, the result of which might in any degree prop up Turkey. (Cheers.) The rev. gentleman then alluded to the dispatch of Lord Derby as calculated to lead to war with Russia, but advised the country to be resolute against such a course. He condemned the Government of Turkey and the vices of the people in the most forcible terms, and said if we fought for Turkey we should lose our character, and losing our character we should lose all, but keeping our character we should keep all things that were worth having. (Cheers.)

The Rev. E. WHITE protested against the statement that the teaching of our Lord Jesus was set aside in this Union on the question of peace, as no command of the New Testament forbade force in connection with the civil government, and the commands as to peace related to private life only.

The resolution was then carried by acclamation, and the Assembly adjourned to Friday morning, when the session will be continued in the Memorial Hall.

The Porte has officially notified its intention to blockade the whole of the Russian coast in the Black Sea.

The *Cologne Gazette* says that the Russian Government has been promised the benevolent neutrality of Germany on the condition that Russia makes no territorial acquisition in Europe.

It will be seen from an advertisement elsewhere, that a new Exchange has been opened in Coleman-street, City, which offers some special conveniences to business men.

The directors of the Sovereign Life Office at their meeting last Wednesday reported a material advance in new business during the past year, and declared a dividend of 5½ per cent. Particulars will be found in an advertisement elsewhere.

Anniversary Meetings.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The seventy-third annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society was held at Exeter Hall on Wednesday, May 2. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided, and was supported by His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, the Bishop of St. Asaph, the Bishop of Melbourne, the Bishop of Bathurst, Bishop Crowther, the Bishop of Guildford, Bishop Alford, Bishop Ryan, Lord Denman, Lord Cottesloe, Earl Fortescue, the Hon. A. Kinnaird, M.P., Sir J. H. Kennaway, M.P., A. McArthur, Esq., M.P., the Rev. Canon Wilkinson, the Rev. Prebendary Auriol, the Rev. J. P. Chown, the Ven. Archdeacon Prest, the Rev. Dr. Forbes (of Paris), the Rev. Dr. Nolan, the Rev. Dr. Raleigh, the Rev. W. E. Cousins, the Rev. C. J. Glyn, H. Pownall, Esq., the Rev. W. Brock, Joseph Hoare, Esq., C. J. Plumptre, Esq., the Rev. W. Braden, and other influential ministers and laymen. A portion of Scripture having been read, prayer was offered by the Rev. C. Jackson, one of the honorary secretaries.

The Rev. S. B. BERGNE read an abstract of the report. It stated that the committee had endeavoured to grapple to a vast extent with the work before them—to withdraw from no field already occupied, but to enter on such fresh openings as God's providence had presented. From the first rumour of hostilities in Servia, the committee were in communication with their agent, Mr. Edward Millar. It was soon discovered that strangers would not be allowed to follow the army, and therefore it was necessary to await the consequences of the strife and to minister to the sufferers. Two experienced Christian men were detached for the work, in the carrying out of which no difference was made between Turks and Servians. (Cheers.) Upwards of 4,000 copies of the Scriptures were issued free, and the circulation of the Austrian Agency was raised to 144,000, or 27,000 copies above the issue of 1875. In Bulgaria the colporteurs were for some months unable to travel with safety to their lives, and in cases where they ran the risk, the condition of the people made Bible work almost impossible. The Central Relief Committee at Constantinople paid those colporteurs the high compliment of selecting them to administer the relief, and the offer was accepted because it was thought it would better prepare the way for the subsequent circulation of the Holy Scriptures. In regard to Servia and Roumania, they were little known until a year ago they started into notoriety. Then it was asked, "Has no one been working there for Christ?" And in reply it was found that this society had been engaged for the last sixty years in giving the people of those countries the Scriptures in their own tongue—circulating in one case 50,000 and in the other 100,000 copies up to the end of 1875. They had carried their work not only into those States, but into Bosnia, Herzegovina, and almost every part of the Turkish Empire. In Egypt a special effort had been made in regard to the towns in the line of the Suez Canal. 28,000 copies was the present circulation of the Turkish Agency, but that was only a tenth part of the Russian circulation, which was 303,000 in 1875, and 275,000 last year. Attention having been called to the army in Bessarabia, it was resolved to reduce the price to the soldiers to one-half, confining the gratuitous distribution to the hospitals, the sick, &c. The work began in January, and 13,000 copies were soon disposed of. One of the officers bought 700 copies for his men, and the last news was that additional colporteurs had been employed, and that the sales had exceeded 80,000 copies. Nothing could have exceeded the willingness of the authorities to help in the preliminary arrangements, and it was now hoped that colporteurs would be allowed to accompany the army. Great efforts had been made in regard to the forthcoming Paris Exhibition, and space had been obtained for exhibiting the society's publications. Remembering the success of the society's kiosk on a similar occasion previously, the committee had asked permission to erect a building in the exhibition grounds as a centre from which sales and gifts of the Holy Scriptures might be effected. That request had been refused, but an excellent site which would answer the purpose almost equally well had been secured just outside the principal entrance. Premises had also been taken as a depot in an admirable situation near the Palais Royal. There were sixty-two colporteurs in France, all of approved Christian character, and superintended by Protestant pastors. The depots in France had been increased to sixty-one, and the entire circulation had risen to 98,000 a year. In Germany and Switzerland the increase had been 4,000 but in France upwards of 40,000. The entire circulation of the German Agency had been 339,000 copies. At this moment the society had the honour of publishing a translation of the New Testament into Hebrew made by that eminent scholar Dr. Davis. In two countries Bible work was actively opposed. In Bohemia the sale of a large number of copies to the military at reduced prices was made an excuse for stopping the colporteurs, and taking away their Bibles, and locking them up. A remonstrance had been sent, to which no reply had yet been received, but it was hardly likely that the Austrian Government would sanction such intolerance. The other country referred to was Spain. In the island of Minorca

two schoolmasters had been fined, and afterwards the agent of the society at Madrid was ordered to obliterate the sign over his depot. He removed it on one side, and was then ordered to obliterate it on the other, and to remove the books from the windows. He declined, but the authorities went and painted out his sign themselves. An eminent Spanish lawyer had been consulted as to the legality of these proceedings under the Article of the Constitution relating to public manifestations, but he declined to bind himself to any interpretation of the Article, on the ground that it might be construed to mean whatever the Government of the day liked. For a short time it was feared that colporteurs would be entirely suppressed, but now it was a matter for hearty thanksgiving that they were allowed to pursue their way, and that their number was about to be added to, while there had been an increase of sixteen per cent. in the circulation. Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Norway, all showed an increase, ranging from 3,000 to 5,000 copies. In Portugal and Sweden there had been a corresponding decrease, but in the former there had been a change of agency, and in the latter the people had long been well supplied with the Scriptures. In Italy, instead of concentrating their agency on the single city of Rome, the society had distributed it all over the land, and in the valleys of Piedmont and other parts twenty-eight colporteurs had circulated over 24,000 copies of the Bible. In Africa they had supplied such editions as were likely to be useful, and in cases where the language of the nations was uncertain, they had aided their missionary brethren in the preparation of suitable versions. Bishop Crowther and Sir W. Muir would speak, the former as to the work in Madagascar, and the latter as to those useful Indian auxuliaries which circulated so many copies annually. Whilst operations were being extended in Persia and Japan, the circulation in China showed a diminution. The missionaries had found the evil of giving away the Scriptures, and had resolved to adhere generally to the principle of sale. Of course the first effect of that would be to check the circulation, but when people understood that the Bible was a book worth paying for, and that all but the poorest were expected to contribute something for it, it would rise in their estimate and come into active demand. Versions of the Bible for the Malay Archipelago were being prepared, and what they might be expected to become was shown by the case of the South Sea Islands, were thousands of volumes were now imported. In South America, the agency at Buenos Ayres had been conducted with great vigour, and one colporteur had just completed a great journey over the Rocky Mountains to the Andes. The colporteurs at Brazil had been hindered by many causes, the chief of which were yellow-fever, poverty, and indifference. New depots had been opened at Chili and Venezuela, in hopes that the present contest of the people of those places with the Church of Rome might induce them to welcome the pure Word of God. A new agency had been appointed in Mexico, but, owing to the state of revolution existing there, comparatively few copies had been sold. In the far North-West, the Scriptures had been supplied to the Indians. In Canada the society received cordial support, and the same might be said of most of the auxiliaries in Australasia and the West Indies. The society received an award for the publications they exhibited at the Philadelphia Exhibition, although their primary object in sending there was only to aid the American Bible Society. (Applause.) At the forthcoming Caxton celebration the committee had also arranged to exhibit their publications. For the Parent Committee the year had been passed amid incessant labour, without a word of disagreement, or any breach except that made by death. At home the committee had refused no well-authenticated application for help, and scarcely a meeting passed without considerable grants being made to schools, hospitals, sailors, emigrants, sufferers, &c.; and the most recent case had been the grant of a Bible to each of the Welsh miners. (Loud applause.) During the year, aid to the extent of 515*l.* had been rendered to the Bible-women, who were working with so much success in London. There had been during the year a slight decrease in the business at home not quite made up by the increase abroad. The total issue at home and abroad had been 2,670,742 copies, or within 12,000 of the year 1875. That brought up the total issues of the Society since its establishment to 79,103,465 copies. Last year the total receipts were 222,000*l.*, and the expenditure 211,000*l.* This year the income has sunk to 206,978*l.* 17s. 7d., whilst the outlay had been 212,408*l.* 12s. 11d.; thus the surplus of 11,000*l.*, which they had last year, was this year changed into a deficiency of 5000*l.* The increase of expenditure was accounted for by new work entered on last May and which, when properly developed, would involve a larger charge than now appeared. The contributions from auxiliaries and annual subscriptions were 66,981*l.*, as against 67,014*l.* in 1875, showing a decrease of less than 34*l.* It was extremely satisfactory to find that, in a year of commercial depression, their chief source of income had practically maintained its previous level; and, upon the whole, the financial statement showed every reason for encouragement. (Applause.) It showed the continued interest taken by Christian people in the work of Bible circulation, and their confidence in the principles and method of this society. The committee, therefore, would confidently rely on friends at home and abroad for the means to carry out with efficiency the work pressing to be done for the glory of God. (Applause.) While men had been disputing as to the meaning of God's Word, and the nature of its authority, the society had sought to spread the Word itself among all nations. Nevertheless, they had not been uninterested spectators of the conflict, and they would not have had heart to pursue their work but for the twofold conviction that the Bible was the Word of God, and that its entrance did give light to the soul. Increased energy was demanded in making known to mankind that gift of God, which all had a right to know, but which had been brought at present to comparatively so few. If they had any doubt as to the transforming power of the Bible, their courage might well fail them in the task; but an experience wider than that which any similar movement could point to furnished overwhelming evidence that the written Word, illuminated by the Spirit of God, sufficed to lead men from the powers of darkness and translate them into the kingdom of His Son. Duty, therefore, bade them continue to circulate the Scriptures particularly in those countries where the living teacher could not find access; that was particularly the case in countries under the sway of the Roman Catholic Church, where Protestant teachers were rigorously excluded, and the only chance of spreading the truth was by circulating the Bible without note or comment. Some of their Christian brethren had misunderstood the work of the society in that direction, and blamed them for circulating translations of the Vulgate, but the fact was that in many Roman Catholic countries the people had been led to believe that the other editions had been falsified for Protestant purposes, and, therefore, it was only by the sale of the Vulgate that they could be reached. The errors of the Vulgate were sometimes overstated, but even when so overstated they faded into insignificance by the side of the great mass of pure Gospel teaching which that translation comprised. The committee could not take on themselves the awful responsibility of saying to the Roman Catholics, "We find certain flaws in this, the only Bible which you will accept, and therefore you must go without the Book altogether." They might as soon refuse water to a dying man because it was not filtered, or bread to the starving because it was not made of the finest wheat. (Applause.) They must judge of the thing by its fruits, and the hatred of the priests to the circulation even of the Vulgate translation was itself a testimony to the value of the work. Not all the objections levelled at them could persuade the committee against the circulation of those editions in countries where they had no chance of circulating the others. They desired, after their Lord's own example, to be servants of all, and if they were to minister to Roman Catholic countries, the highest reasons combined to support the course they had hitherto adopted. (Loud applause.)

The Archbishop of CANTERBURY, who was cordially received, in moving the adoption of the report, said that the Church of which he had the honour of being a minister took care that the Holy Scriptures should from beginning to end be read in the course of every year in every congregation of the Church of England in this kingdom. "The Book, the whole Book, and nothing but the Book," they were bound to bring before the people. There was no man calling himself a Christian who did not acknowledge the supremacy of the Word of God. Even those who said that the book had a good deal in it that was dangerous, still did not deny that it was the Word of God. From one end of Christendom to the other the Sacred Scriptures, as we possessed them, were acknowledged as the Word of God. There was no country in Europe in which there was any great difficulty as to the free course of the Scriptures with the exception of Bohemia. His grace, however, trusted that under the intelligent administration which at present guided the affairs of the Austrian Empire, which was so different from that which prevailed some fifteen years ago, the difficulties would speedily disappear, and that there would be no country in Europe in which the Word of God would not have a free course. (Applause.) Speaking of the difficulties at home, his grace said he had no fear of sceptical views of the Scripture making much progress. (Applause.) He thought the Book might be trusted to speak for itself. It was not as if these truths were confined to this sentence or that; they breathed through it from one end to the other, and the only intelligible way of preventing the doctrines of the Bible from finding their way into men's hearts was to say that they would destroy the Book altogether, and that there was not a word of truth in it from beginning to end. Some alarm had been felt by uninstructed people because a right rev. brother of his and a number of other persons were engaged in revising the translation of these Scriptures. He remembered a very good person saying to him, "So you are going to have a new Bible?" He remembered also that in the days of Richard Bentley, when he proposed to give all the various texts, a number of excellent people said, "Why, you will upset the whole faith of the nation." He had no such fears. Let the Bible be examined with the utmost minuteness, the most reverent criticism, let the light of day be poured upon every verse of it, and his faith in the Scriptures and the truth and glory of Him who delivered them was so great that he felt convinced that those doctrines which spoke to their souls would only come out more clearly the more the Book was examined. (Applause.)

Sir WILLIAM MUIR, in seconding the resolution, said it was a great satisfaction to him to be present, because there were congregated on a common platform representatives from all the Protestant establishments of England. About thirty years ago there was a Bible Society established in Agra, and from that time he had had the honour of being connected with its operations, both in that city and in Allahabad, to which it was subsequently transferred, and in Calcutta, where he had the honour of holding the office of vice-president of the society during the whole of his career in India. It was of value to have a great society behind them to regulate and give force and guidance, just as the fly-wheel governed the machinery to which it was attached, to the operations of that society in India. (Hear, hear.) Much work could be and was done in giving the Gospel to the 240,000,000 of people in India. Throughout the whole of that vast country the way was clear. They had not to encounter the difficulties that had been met with in other parts of the world; for everywhere the Gospel could be put into the hands of the natives of India, not only in their own districts, but also in those of foreign potentates, there being no let or hindrance anywhere. (Hear, hear.) There was, however, a great work still remaining to be done, for although translations of the Scriptures had been made in the language of some of the chief districts, there was yet much to be done in many parts of the country where translations are still wanted, and many, perhaps all, of the translations already published, required to be perfected, for the work of translation is one of the most difficult that the human mind could accomplish. He might point out how the Bible compared in its ethics with the precepts of Islam, especially in matters relating to the social condition of the people.

Polygamy, divorce, and female slavery have been perpetuated by the Koran. There was, no doubt, polygamy among the Jews before the time of our Saviour, but the simple words which He uttered, having once gone forth, swept polygamy from all Christian countries, and have had the effect of raising woman to the position she ought to hold. I might refer to the social intercourse of the sexes. In the Koran it is laid down in what way and at what times they may enter a house, in what way and at what times they may dine with each other, and what relations may come to each other's dwellings, and it is also laid down that the women must wear certain veils, and must not appear unveiled before certain classes of their relatives, who are mentioned by name. Now, my lord, compare the teaching of Christianity with this. Compare with this the general and not the vague principles which Christianity lays down, and which are capable of adjustment and adoption among all nations and in all ages. Recall to your minds such precepts as this—that the men are to treat the older women as mothers and the younger women as sisters. That is a beautiful precept which has adapted itself to every country and to every age. Christianity teaches also that, instead of veiling themselves, the women are to attire themselves in sobriety and modesty. It is from precepts such as these which Christianity has given that women have been able to assume their present high position. Mahomet lays down in the Koran, in addition to the precept of polygamy, that husbands may chastise their wives if they are disobedient, and put them into separate apartments. (Laughter.) In an assembly where so large a portion of my audience consists of ladies, I would rather not say whether in some conditions of society this precept might be applicable or not. (Laughter.) What I wish to say is, that the beauty and wisdom of Christianity appears in its laying down, not individual precepts dealing with matters of detail, but large principles which have eventuated in the elevation of women wherever Christianity is taught. (Cheers.) In point of fact that single verse about giving honour to the wife as to the weaker vessel, and being heirs together to the grace of heaven, has done more to elevate women in Christendom than anything else. As I do not wish to weary you, I will only refer to one other point, and that is the question of slavery. This is mentioned, as you are aware, in the Koran, which says that a man may have as many slaves, male and female, as his right hand possesses fingers. Now, slavery was in existence at the rise of Christianity, and it is nowhere laid down in the Bible that slavery is unlawful. This is because the Bible has not attempted to law down rules for the civil administration of a country; it interferes not with the things that are Cæsar's; but the principles and the spirit of the Gospel have had the effect of abolishing slavery. I believe that those words of St. Paul, in which he said of Onesimus that he was to be treated not now as a servant, but above a servant—as a brother beloved—have been the programme for the abolition of slavery for ever from the world, and I am glad to see our brother beloved (alluding to Bishop Crowther) sitting here with us to-day, (Cheers.) These are the great principles which Christianity lays down.

On coming back to England after a long absence he was struck with two things—first, the general observance of Sunday as a day of rest; and, second, that he found the Bible everywhere. That society he regarded as the emblem of liberty and freedom, and where their agents were they would be sure to find Christianity and the elevation of the human race. (Cheers.)

The Rev. J. P. CHOWN, after comparing the meagre circulation of the Scriptures at the close of the last century with that of the present time, when the Bible was translated into 210 languages, and was circulated during the past year at the rate of fifteen copies per minute day and night, said that it was an infinite mercy that God had given us a written revelation in such a form that by its aid the Bible might not only be preserved, but reproduced and multiplied indefinitely, and circulated to any extent, either as to the duration of successive years in time, or to the extent of surrounding space, among the populations of the earth. They were about to have a celebration in connection with the printing press—that wonderful press

which surrounded them with all the orators, and the poets, and the statesmen, and the great men of all the ages that had ever been. Thanks to the printing press, Plato lived in England and in London to-day to plead with them with his wondrous power as old; Homer sang his grand old song to-day amid all the clamour and turmoil of the working-day world around them, as in ancient Greece, in the days when first his fame was known; Newton lived amongst them in London to-day, taught the principles and laws of God's universe, and led them to kneel with reverence before the works of Him to whom they looked from nature up to nature's God; to-day Milton lifted those sightless eyeballs of his to the eternal throne, and drank in streams of living inspiration that he poured out again in lofty descant upon the glorious themes of which he told; to-day Bunyan lived to tell them his grand old dream—(applause)—and Livingstone lived in the living page to tell the world of his sanctified devotedness, the inspiration of the patience that sustained his soul, and the glowing, burning fervour in which, like another Baptist in the nineteenth century, he was "a voice in the wilderness" telling of Christ and the everlasting God. (Applause.) If they rejoiced in the printing press in regard to these, how much more might they rejoice in it in regard to the inspiration of the Divine Word they desired to make known around them. It was the Bible for which their missionary societies existed, and which they sent to distant lands, and if ever Ethiopia was to "stretch out her hands unto God," it must be as it was with that Ethiopian they read of in the Acts of the Apostles, who not only went to Jerusalem to worship, but had the Bible in his possession, and read it by the way as he journeyed, studied it in his daily life, and received the truth from its page by the teaching of Philip, the missionary whom God sent. There was the result then, and there should be the result still. (Applause.) Whatever other influences may gather around it, it was for the Bible that the pulpit was first reared, and it was as the pulpit was true to the Bible that it would deserve to be honoured. If but for one moment it forgot its solemn charge and proved recreant to the high trust, whatever might be substituted in the stead of God's word, from that moment her power was gone; but as long as she stood true to that trust, she stood founded on the Rock of Ages, and would be filled with Divine authority and clothed with Divine power. (Applause.)

The Rev. W. E. COUSINS, of Madagascar, moved the next resolution as follows:—

That this meeting recognises with devout thankfulness the many tokens of Divine goodness by which the course of the British and Foreign Bible Society has been marked during the past year; and whilst tracing in this a loud call to renewed activity and zeal in this branch of God's service, would plead most earnestly that the Holy Spirit's influence may accompany the written Word wherever circulated, and make it effectual to the ingathering of many souls within the fold of Christ.

He said that he had been for several years engaged in the revision of the Malagasy Bible, a work undertaken with the approval of that society, and carried out at its expense, and he was glad to have the opportunity of acknowledging with deepest thanks their great indebtedness to that noble society for their long-continued co-operation and gifts, and they found that they had never over-taxed the liberality of the Bible Society. (Hear, hear.) If they rejoiced over the fact that the Gospel in Madagascar had triumphed over the bitter hatred of a heathen Government, and that Christian faith was kept alive during a quarter-of-a-century of persecution, if they rejoiced that in these later years the Gospel had overthrown the old national idolatry of Madagascar, then he must be allowed to congratulate that society on being permitted to bear an honourable share in that great work. Referring to the early labours of missionaries in that island, he said that to David Jones and David Griffiths belonged the great honour of having prepared for the Malagasy people the first translation of the complete Bible—(applause)—a work carried on and completed under immense disadvantages, for there was no written language, no literature, and no classics in that country. The Bible was completed in manuscript in 1828, and the printing was completed in 1830, when the first edition of the New Testament, consisting of 3,000 copies, was presented to the people. Thus within ten years these men had mastered the language, and had so systematised its orthography, that they had completed the preliminary translation of the whole Bible, and they had printed an edition of 3,000 copies of the New Testament. All honour to the men to whom it was granted to do such a noble work. (Applause.) No sooner was the printing of the New Testament finished than the printing of the Old Testament was begun. That work proceeded month after month, and year after year, and as different portions were finished, they were circulated among the people. Thus much of the Old Testament was in the hands of the people before the outbreak of persecution. In that memorable year, 1835, Christianity was prohibited, and for twenty-five years it was only at the risk of his life that a Malagasy Christian could possess a copy of God's Word, and yet notwithstanding this, there were men who dared to retain the precious treasure and to bind it to their hearts. (Applause.) The missionaries went on as long as possible with the translation and printing of the Bible, but were obliged to leave the capital in 1836. But the written word remained behind them, and the cases containing the books were buried in the ground, precious seed that God watched over, and they knew how that glorious seed had produced a harvest for which they should all praise Him. (Applause.) But though the missionaries were no longer there to guide the people, there was there that living power, the blessed Spirit of all truth, the best teacher, and He preserved alive in their hearts the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. These Malagasy Christians loved their Bible. It was a distinguishing mark of their Christianity. Nothing that Queen Ranavala could do with all her strong will and her determined opposition to the Gospel could wean her people from their love of the blessed Book. (Cheers.) From time to time the seventy buried copies of the Bible were served out to such of the native Christians as desired to accept the precious treasure, to be held at the peril of their lives. Some of those copies were worn out with constant use; but even their torn leaves were accounted precious in those days, and were carefully distributed among the converts. Some of those Bibles fell into the hands of the officers of the Queen, and were burnt or otherwise destroyed; some ten or fifteen copies still exist. There was one copy, roughly bound in undressed cowhide, in the library of that society—(cheers)—other copies were in the hands of the present missionaries, and some few of them were still treasured by some of the older Christians in the island. Ten or fifteen complete Bibles lived through the whole of the storm of persecution. Who could look at one of those copies without feeling a thrill of the deepest emotion? (Cheers.) The people resorted to all sorts of ingenious contrivances for hiding their Bibles. When Queen Ranavala died, and the persecution ceased, himself and other missionaries on being allowed to return saw something of the love of the people for their Bibles. When the supply of the Scriptures came up from Tamatave to the capital, three days were set apart for distributing them, and during all that time their house was crowded from morning to night, and they were able to circulate in that time 3,000 copies of the Scriptures in whole or in part, of which more than 2,000 were paid for. (Cheers.) Now they had a complete Bible for a shilling—(renewed cheers)—and it had been the *one* book of the Malagasy people, who had no literature of their own. In that island a long time ago the Roman Catholics had tried to plant missions in Madagascar with great zeal, but there was no thought of Bible translation. They (the Protestants) regarded the work as essential, and the result was seen after only sixteen years' labour in the present religious condition of the island. It was the older Christians, nurtured during the trying period of persecution who, in these days when the nominal profession of Christianity was fashionable, leavened the whole lump. They had some 700 mission schools, in which 45,000 were being taught. Bibles were used in all the schools, and when a Malagasy child learnt to read, his first book would be the New Testament. (Applause.) Thus they looked to this appreciation of God's Word, this strong love of the Bible that was developed during the time of the persecution, as the nation's safeguard against their becoming simply nominal Christians. Then this general appreciation and acceptance of the Bible on the part of the Malagasy made them hopeful that they would never as a nation yield to the attacks of Popery. (Hear, hear.) The Jesuit Mission was powerful there, and employed some sixty agents, who constantly told the people that the Protestants gave them a mutilated Bible, but had never produced a version of the New Testament themselves, until last year, since he had left Antananarivo, when the Romish press there issued a version of the Gospel of Matthew with abundance of anti-Protestant notes. These men had complained in their official "Annals of the Propagation of the Faith," that there was not a single village of Madagascar "unaffected by the bite of the serpent of heresy." He rejoiced in that unwilling testimony—that the glorious Bible, this so-called book of heresy, had been so generally diffused, and that this so-called poison had affected so many of the Malagasy people. Therein lay the ground of their hope that Madagascar, as a nation, would never yield to the attacks of Popery. (Applause.) Mr. Cousins went on to say that in the capital they had a committee for the revision of their translation of the Bible, and that that committee consisted of a principal reviser, and of delegates from the various bodies of Christian missionaries working in Madagascar. The London Missionary Society sent three delegates; the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel one delegate; the Norwegian Missionary Society two delegates; and the Society of Friends another. Coming as they did from different sections of Christ's Church, they were glad to find that there was no practical difficulty in the way of co-operating in that glorious work. (Applause.) They further believed that, as they were thus brought nearer together, a sort of brotherly love and harmony would be promoted—(applause)—and thereby show to the natives at least one thing, that though we might be divided upon some minor points, they were all one in their loyalty to God's blessed work. (Applause.) He was present at the coronation of the present Queen Ranavala the Second. She sat beneath a beautifully made canopy, all gilt, and round about the canopy were inscribed the words, "Glory to God, peace on earth, goodwill to men." (Applause.) And just below Queen Ranavala was placed a small ornamental table, and upon that table was laid a handsomely bound Bible, the gift of that society to King Radama. Thus did Queen Ranavala declare in the presence of all her people that she had done with idolatry, and that her faith lay in the Word of God. (Applause.) He was happy to say that Queen Ranavala read the Bible in private; she heard it read and preached from it in public; and, more than that, he had seen her act as a distributor of God's Word. About three or four years ago he was present at a large school examination at the capital of Betsileo, about 200 miles from Antananarivo. At the close of the examination the Queen made presents to some of the more diligent scholars, and those presents chiefly consisted of hymn-books and Testaments. Thus was the Queen of Madagascar engaged in the great work of Bible circulation. (Applause.) Might they not regard these later changes that had come over the Government of Madagascar as an earnest of brighter and happier days for the people? Might they not pray earnestly that, as in the dark days of persecution, so in these brighter days of liberty, the faith of the Madagascar people might be based upon the pure Word of God. (Applause.)

The Rev. Prebendary CADMAN seconded the resolution in an impressive speech, and it was unanimously agreed to.

The Rev. MARMADUKE C. OSBORN proposed the next resolution as follows:—

That the thanks of this meeting be given to the president and vice-presidents for their continued patronage; also to Joseph Hoare, Esq., the treasurer, who is requested to continue his services. That grateful thanks be also presented to the officers, committees, and collectors of the various auxiliaries, branches, and associations throughout this country and the colonies; to whose untiring zeal and energy the society is again indebted for so large an amount of free contributions during the past year, and to whom they would earnestly appeal for a continuance of their efficient and valuable services; and that the following gentlemen [named] be the committee for the ensuing year, with power to fill up vacancies."

It was, he said, his honour to be a member of the Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, and he knew something of the extent to which that was indebted to the Bible Society; and it was only on Monday last, when the anniversary meeting of that Wesleyan society was held in this room, that grateful mention was made of an instance of assistance by this society during the course of the past year in providing a supply of copies of the Scriptures in Arabic for the use of their newly-revived and resuscitated mission on the Gambia. The object of that society was very simple, and the simplicity of the object was the charm of it. In the course of an eloquent speech, Mr. Osborn said that the suitability of the teaching of the Bible to the wants of the world had been tried amongst all people, and in all places, upon men of every caste, every colour, every clime; amid the snows of Labrador, and the sunny islands of the Southern Seas; it had passed to the great Australasian land; it had found its way and flourished on the banks of the majestic rivers and amid the pine forests of the great American continent; it had proved its suitability and been successful amid the teeming cities of China, on the plains of India, in the wilds of Africa, upon all sorts and conditions of men the wide world over. It has been tried by the Queen in the palace of royalty, and by the peasant in the hut of poverty; by the rich man in purple and fine linen faring sumptuously every day, and by the lazaretted beggar at his door, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fall from his table; by listening youth and tottering age; in every meridian of longitude, and every line of latitude; on the man panting at the line, and on the man shivering at the pole; it had failed nowhere; it had succeeded everywhere, and it had proved itself to be the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. (Applause.)

Bishop CROWTHER, in an interesting speech, seconded the resolution, and expressed his gratitude for the benefits conferred on Africa by that society. His great purpose in coming to this country was to obtain means to navigate the Niger River in order to extend their missionary efforts there. Through the help of that society they had been able to do what they had already done in that country. He was labouring directly on the banks of the Niger, and had nearly completed the Yoruba translation, and the Rev. Mr. Shaen has in hand the translation of the Houssa Bible. It was so far advanced that certain books of the Old and New Testaments had been printed and were in use. The Yoruba language was spoken on the banks of the Niger, as far as Boussa, the scene of Mungo Park's death, and it would carry them through all this country, and the Houssa language would carry you from Lagos to Tunis, or to Tripoli, and thus the translation into these languages was of very great importance. They had no colporteurs on the banks of the Niger, because the people could not read. They read the Bible to them and taught their children to read the English Bible until such time as they could translate the Scriptures into their own language. Many of the people, such as those under the King of Bras, were anxious for the Bible, and it was often read by the Mahomedan priests, and explained by himself and those with him. In that way they had succeeded so well that when they had to enlarge their place of worship the heathens and Mahomedans contributed to the expense, and when it was opened no less than 300 persons, heathens, Mahomedans, and Christians, attended. (Applause.) Bishop CROWTHER gave some interesting details of his interviews with

various chiefs, who showed a great desire to possess the Bible, especially of one who valued it, but had to send his Arabic Bible to the Sultan at the special request of the latter. Subsequently the bishop gave that chief two other copies, and told him that if any other Sultan wanted a Bible he could give him one. In this way he (the bishop) liked to circulate the Bible among the ignorant people, so that they might make a good use of it and read for themselves the Gospel of salvation, and not make a fanatical use of it. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Canon WILKINSON moved, and the Rev. Dr. STOUGHTON seconded, a cordial vote of thanks to the chairman, and Lord SHAFTESBURY, in responding, said that if he were to speak what he felt both in extent and in depth, hours might be occupied in that room before he had expressed one-half of what God had put into his heart. (Applause.) He joined with them all in praying Almighty God that the operations of that society might be extended to the farthest corners of the earth, and that the great effort of their mind, and the great prayer of their hearts might ever be that the Word of the Lord should have free course and be glorified.

The benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Mr. BERGNE, and the meeting separated.

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

The seventy-eighth annual meeting of this society was held at Exeter Hall on Friday evening last. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided, supported by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, Mr. Francis Peek, Rev. Dr. Morley Punshon, Rev. Dr. Stoughton, Sir Charles Reed, and many other ministers and gentlemen. The hymn, "O Spirit of the living God," having been sung, the Rev. Dr. Stoughton offered prayer.

The CHAIRMAN said that after an interval of some years he again found himself on that platform at the service (he wished he could say to the aid) of the Religious Tract Society. He congratulated them and himself also that they found that society not only alive and active after so long an interval of years, but faithful to its principles when so many had been untrue to theirs, faithful, when so many with names of note which formerly impressed a value upon their publications had fallen away from their principles, faithful when one of the great societies, having led her children by many of her writings in the ways of Romanism, was now endeavouring to lead them in the direction of neology. In these days the operations of such a society as theirs were of incalculable value. He liked their method of operation. It was aggressive, and by the shape, mode, and attractiveness of their publications, they forced themselves on the notice and attention of the public. They did not wait to be asked, but they went forward, and carried their arms into the strongholds of the enemy, and fought him on his own ground. He was reminded of what was once said by the Duke of Wellington respecting the Burmese frontier, that no frontier was good for defence unless it was equally good for attack. That was their position. When he looked at the magnitude of their operations he was struck with astonishment. 456 new publications, of which 122 were tracts, had been issued during the last year, containing with reprints, over six hundred million pages, while the foreign issue was ten millions; making a total circulation of nearly sixty-two millions. What a handmaid was that society to the Bible and Missionary Societies? And if they prayed for the extension of its operations, must they not pray with greater intensity for the purity of its writings and for its continued soundness in evangelical truth? He was very much disposed to think that leaflets and tracts produced a very much greater effect upon the world than ponderous volumes, and many a man of great intellect had obtained more good from a tract than from a volume. But for the great mass of the people those short pithy tracts were the one thing needful. Their satisfaction in circulating those publications amongst the people was increased by knowing that they could depend upon their contents. They prayed, therefore, that the society might live and prosper, and that God would so watch over its publications that each might be taken with the same confidence as they took the shekel of the sanctuary. He heartily thanked God for the existence of that institution, and prayed that being founded in love and rooted in charity it might have its great end according to its beginning. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. MANNING, one of the secretaries, then gave an abstract of the report, which commenced with a feeling reference to the late Dr. Davis and his great services to the Religious Tract Society, and to the appointment of two secretaries to discharge the duties of the vacant post. Notwithstanding a year of unusual commercial depression, the committee were able to report an advance in every department of their operations. The benevolent income had been larger, but the applications for grants in aid of the society's missionary work had been so urgent and numerous that nearly 11,000*l.* had been drawn from the trade funds to meet the demands. The committee felt it needful, however, to appeal to their friends for increased contributions to enable them to meet the requirements of a work which was each year growing in extent and importance. The annotated paragraph New Testament, in Arabic, was ready for publication, and the Mahrattee and Singalese were progressing, while a version for the Nestorians had been undertaken at the expense of Mr. James Peek, of Torquay, and the committee were anxious to extend the translations to all countries. Special funds had been contributed for the supply of evangelical literature to Servia and Bulgaria, and a Russian committee was about to be formed in St. Petersburg. Dr. Craig had been entrusted with the task of superintending tract distribution amongst the combatants in South-Eastern Europe. A central depot had also been established in Paris. While the spiritual wants of foreign countries were cared for as far as the society's funds would allow, the claims of home were not forgotten. 1,243 libraries in Great Britain had been supplied with publications, and about five million tracts granted for London alone. 4,000 Bibles and Testaments had been given as prizes to children of the London Board schools, of whom 72,000 entered for examination. During the present year the number had increased to 92,000. During the year 455 new publications were issued of which 122 were tracts—containing with the reprints over 602 million pages, while the total circulation from the Home Depot, including books, tracts, periodicals etc., was over 51 millions, of which about half were tracts. From foreign depots 10 millions; making a total circulation of nearly 62 millions and of nearly 1,720 million since the formation of the society. The total receipts from all sources amounted to 152,529*l.* 7s. 9d., and the total expenditure to 150,725*l.* 4s. 3d., leaving balance in favour of the society of 1,804*l.* 3s. 6d. The missionary expenditure amounted to 37,947*l.* 9s. 4d., being 9,280*l.* 13s. 9d., more than last year, and the amount exceeds the receipts by 10,776*l.* 7s. 10d.; which had been supplied from the trade funds. Tracts and books to the value of 20,732*l.* 18s. 8d., had been granted to Home Societies and subscribers. The society's work in France, Belgium, and Switzerland, had received an impulse from a conference held in Paris, at which a deputation from London met representatives of the various societies labouring in those countries. The result has been a considerable increase in the production and distribution of French tracts, and large grants had been made to various societies and individuals, from whom gratifying testimonies had been received of the value of the assistance thus rendered. Notwithstanding the hostility of the Government and of the priests, the operations in Spain had not been suspended, the attempt to suppress Protestantism by a strained interpretation of Article XI. of the Constitution having proved a failure. There is little to report concerning Italy except that the Claudian Press at Florence continued to produce a large number of publications which are gratefully received by the various Protestant Churches throughout the Peninsula, and, in not a few cases, read by Romanists. In Germany various societies had received liberal grants. A central depot had been opened in Berlin, a new association formed for colportage and tract distribution in Hanover. The Russian Tract Society had received the authorisation of the Government, and was working vigorously for the evangelisation of that vast empire. In Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia, the report shows continued progress. In Servia and Bulgaria a most hopeful commencement had been made, which promised to be productive of important results. Arrangements had been made for an extensive distributions of tracts and books at the seat of war in Turkey. In Norway, Sweden, Holland, Greece, and other smaller European States, the operations of the society have been on a larger scale than in any former year. The applications for grants in aid of missionary work in India were increasing in number and urgency year by year. During the past year 976*l.*, and 3,276 reams of paper have been voted, besides electrotypes, coloured pictures, and 144*l.* worth of English tracts. The extension of missionary operations in China has caused a growing demand for religious literature, which it has been the endeavour of the committee to meet. In Japan the progress has been slow but encouraging. The introduction of a large amount of infidel literature, amongst a people who are but just waking up to Western thought, affords a strong incentive to increasing effort among them. Important help has been given to the American missionaries working in Persia, Syria, and other parts of Western Asia. Large grants have been made to the British American Tract and Book Society of Halifax, Nova Scotia, to Canada, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Prince Edward's Island, and other parts of the Dominion. In Mexico, Brazil, and Venezuela, the committee have gladly availed themselves of the openings so unexpectedly offered. Grants of money and paper have been made to Dr. Butler, in the city of Mexico, and to Mr. Pascoe at Toluca Grants have been made to missionaries in Zanzibar, Lagos, Sierra Leone, and other stations on the coasts, and to missionaries seeking to penetrate the interior of the continent. Editions of valuable books have been printed for the French Evangelical Society in the languages of various tribes in Southern Africa. Libraries and tracts have been voted for the Cape Colonies, the Dutch Free State, and the Transvaal Republic. And in Madagascar, the assistance rendered in former years has been renewed. Numerous grants have also been made to the colonies and missionary stations in the Southern Ocean.

The Bishop of GLOUCESTER and BRISTOL, in moving the adoption of the report and appointment of the committee for the ensuing year, said that, like the Chairman, he had experienced a bewildering effect as he heard of the variety and extent of the society's operations. Many persons thought of it as a great and good society mainly employed in publishing and circulating useful books and tracts, or that it was an old society, and they sympathised and rejoiced in the work accomplished, but few realised what was being done in the way put before them in the admirable report. They there saw that it was a *religious* tract society (and it would bear that honoured name to the end), and that it was a society for the diffusion of evangelical truth throughout the world. It was really the second of the two silent missionary societies of the world. They give the first place to the great British and Foreign Bible Society, which was the first great silent missionary society of the earth, and the second was their own society. (Hear, hear.) Where the living voice could not penetrate, there their annotated Bibles and tracts were circulated in one hundred and thirty of the languages spoken in the globe. (Hear, hear.) They began to realise the magnitude of their operations, and they took heart and thanked God—the more so when they remembered that it rested its strong foundation upon one of the two great truths of the Reformation—justification by faith in Christ, which was represented in every publication they issued. They should be very thankful to God that their society was true and faithful to that great truth, and he would express himself in true sympathy with the noble chairman that they did stand fast in the old paths. Let them consider how they were carrying out those great principles, how they were disseminating them, and the means whereby they were doing it. Looking at their home operations, he found that numbers of their best tracts had gone to their sailors, and four thousand copies of God's blessed Word had been given by way of prizes and encouragement to forty thousand children in London School Board schools competing for them. So that the society, while surveying wide fields of Christian labour abroad, did not forget the little ones at home. Without alluding to Europe, he would point out the great work that society was endeavouring to do in India, Japan, and China. The work was great in India, where there was now a considerable native press. Some three hundred newspapers were circulated and edited by native editors, and much that was contrary and hostile to the truth of Christ was circulated. It was right, therefore, that they should ally themselves with the Christian Vernacular Education Society of India. There was a strange awakening through that mighty country, and that society was striving to spread those tracts of truth and light, and so to follow the blessed Bible and be the humble handmaid in promoting its wider circulation. In Japan their work was of the most hopeful nature, only equalled, perhaps, by what they were now doing in China. They were told that even the ossified Chinese mind was now becoming like their own, for the good Chinamen were taking to light literature, and they had some proclivities towards tracts. They were doing the work of translating as well as they might, and circulating those little tracts which now superseded more ponderous volumes. They were trying to meet the peculiarity of the Eastern mind, and they were very thankful at home for those pleasant volumes, so agreeable without and within. The volume in which their indefatigable secretary recorded his observations of America, and other volumes of a deeper kind, were needed at that time. Their noble president had raised the tone of serious warning because there were fallings away from the faith of Christ Jesus, and they had reason to be thankful when they could come to a society like that and buy without questioning for themselves and their children that wholesome literature which was both interesting and was ever drawing the young soul to Christ by the true bonds of Christian teaching and love. (Hear, hear.) Let them be thankful to God for that, and also feel the completest confidence, because every tract published was first carefully considered by the committee and voted upon, and there was a true Christian vigilance exercised which ought to commend the society to Christian people. In conclusion, the Bishop alluded to the means by which that great society was carried on. The Christian public only subscribed some 11,000*l.* for the carrying on of that mighty undertaking, and he thought that all who had heard of its operations should bestir themselves and take their part in aiding that society, and in enabling it to enter into those great fields of Christian work which it could not now do for lack of funds. He earnestly hoped that the operations of that society might be more completely and fully known, and that it might be more cordially and heartily supported. (Cheers.)

The Rev. WILLIAM WRIGHT, B.A., late of Damascus, representing the British and Foreign Bible Society, seconded the resolution. Referring to the work of the society in the Turkish Empire, he said they were determined to settle the Turkish question not in a political fashion, but by scattering the seeds of Divine truth throughout that Empire, which owing to misrule was in a ruinous state. As an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society he was proud to advocate the claims of the Religious Tract Society, for there was no antagonism between the two societies, but he had found them mutually helpful. The one sent out the Bible, and the other supplemented and illustrated it by their publications. They must present the sanctified intellect of England to the Turks in their own language, and he was happy to say that there were now throughout that empire a great number who were thoroughly educated in the doctrines of the Bible. The Religious Tract Society was employing those

men in giving the Gospel to their countrymen in their own sweet language. In urging the duty of that society to undertake the moral elevation of Syria, he would say that its work required a certain state of preparedness which now existed there. There was an opportunity for them to step in and mould the national life. In 1824 the first school was established at Beyrout and now that little one had become a thousand. Syria and Palestine had now their schools and schoolmasters, and in 1875, 11,000 children were educated in those schools, and received Bible lessons daily. Unless they gave them good books to read, others would give them bad books. They could not pass through the trials they had endured without change, and it was now a favourable opportunity for sowing the truth in their minds and hearts. He considered that the best way to settle the Turkish question in the light of British interests. (Cheers.)

Mr. FRANCIS PEEK, of the London School Board, said he was happy to respond to the invitation to say a few words in regard to the study of the Scriptures in the elementary schools of the metropolis. He would say nothing as to its work in diffusing tract l iterature, nor the missionary work it was carrying out, though he could not help remarking that it was a very startling fact that there were publications of that society in 130 different languages. It was as a society for the diffusion of pure literature that it appeared to him to be most valuable. This was an age of great intellectual activity owing to the wide extension of education. The thousands leaving their schools would read something, and unless they were supplied with good food they would feed upon poison. 120 tracts and 330 other publications had been issued by that society last year, and he could not conceive the vast blank which would have been left if the people had not been supplied with that literature. It had published the annotated paragraph Bible which he prized more than any other, and, if they only got a good revised version in that form it would produce a revolution in the study of the Bible. Last year through its help 4,000 Bibles and Testaments were given away as prizes to the children of London board schools who excelled in biblical knowledge. 87,000 children in the board schools had voluntarily been examined on the subject. (Hear, hear.) Europe, which had cast off its faith, was about to be plunged into a dreadful war, and how should those nations rise again unless the pure Gospel penetrated them. (Hear, hear.) If England was to be prevented from sinking into degredation like other nations, it could only be through personal and national purity, and the knowledge of the Gospel. It was because he looked upon that society as the best Bible society, and appreciated the liberality and broadness of view with which its publications were issued, that he thanked them from the bottom of his heart, and wished them greater work and a still greater reward. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. MORLEY PUNSHON, who was loudly applauded on rising, said he was glad to be there to render his tribute of respect and admiration to that society. And he had the initial advantage that he had commenced to read the report, regarding it as a tonic and a nervine. He found in it some very interesting reading, stranger and more interesting than fiction, and which confirmed his faith in the Gospel and the evidence of their religion. He rejoiced in the operations of that society, because it was one of those opportunities of Catholicity which were none too many in this age. (Cheers.) And it tended to show how in their work for Christ all evangelical churches had about them the substance of unity, which was "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." (Hear, hear.) It was a sort of moral telephone which made men hear each other speak, although distant from one another. It beat the telephone in this—that could only represent the living voice, but here the representatives of the former time being dead yet spoke. It asserted Christ's right to reign in the realm of literature, and he wished it all success in its battle with evil, and rejoiced in it because it seemed to issue those publications which were suited to the wants of this busy age. The era of ponderous tomes had gone past, and they wanted something short and something that the wayfaring man could read as he ran. And it was needful to endeavour to meet the popular demand for something short, sharp, and decisive. Whilst he shared in the belief that an outside view of the society's operations made the head to swim by its vast extent, he thought an inside view steadied the head. He fully coincided in the remark made as to the effects of their works. He thought of Peter Wads, who gave up his work and went out to the Piedmontese, and from whose tractarian leaflets sprang the Waldensian Churches. He thought of John Wykliffe, 500 years since, who was summoned before Bishop Courtenay at St. Paul's, and the controversy waxed so strong that the assembly broke up in confusion. He saw in vision one of his tracts given by a Bohemian nobleman to John Huss, and bringing him to acknowledge the purity and power of the truth as it is in Jesus. He thought of how that early champion of the Reformation, Farrell, formed a Tract Society in Basle. God had greatly honoured some of the smaller works of Luther, who wrote prefaces to a good many works that he published. One of those prefaces to his Commentary on Galatians found its way to the heart of John Bunyan, and his preface to Romans brought John Wesley to Christ. (Hear, hear.) He (the speaker) had lately received a translation of the Pilgrim's Progress in Chinese, and all the characters therein were represented as Chinamen and Chinawomen with pigtails—(laughter)—and he was glad to find that their love of light literature, of which they had heard, was likely to have its pabulum in such works as that. John Wesley was a zealous tract distributor fifty years before that society was born, and he was surprised that in their jubilee memorial he was not mentioned. The "Bruised Reed" brought Richard Baxter in spirit to God, and Baxter's ministry was like the sun in its strength. He wrote the "Call to the Unconverted," and that call went into the hands of Philip Doddridge, and was the means of enlightening him with a broader knowledge and richer faith. He wrote the "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," which feel into the hands of William Wilberforce, and awakened him to seriousness and prayer, and he wrote a book, "Practical View of Christianity," which fired the heart of a clergyman who had attained the broadest reputation of all—Legh Richmond—and he wrote the simple annals of a Methodist girl, and called it "The Dairyman's Daughter," and into how many languages had that been translated? (Cheers.) That book on Practical Christianity went up to Scotland, and found there a clergyman preaching a Gospel he did not know, and he came forth and preached all Scotland round—that clergyman was Thomas Chalmers. (Cheers.) Looking back, then, at Sibbes, Baxter, Doddridge, Wilberforce, Legh Richmond, and Chalmers, was there not a true apostolical succession? (Cheers.) If they went abroad they thought of Coligny, who, through some tracts given him by his brother, was converted, and he became the champion of the Huguenots; and one of those very tracts found its way into a convent, and converted a lady, who took refuge at the Court of Frederick III., and in the course of time she got married—as all right-minded ladies do—(laughter)—and her husband was William, Prince of Orange. God had various ways of working. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," and it bears seed and ripens grain. The need was as great as ever it was. The Ark of God was never carried out in hotter battle than that of to-day, and those still small voices were as necessary for the people as ever they were. There was hunger for those things, and the language was, "Evermore give us this bread"; and he wondered that anyone should try to satisfy the people with anything else. In France there had been a great change in the people since the last war. They had become solidified and filled with those robust qualities which make a nation great. In France, in Spain—everywhere—there was hunger for the word of life. They wanted more personal service. There was a growing tendency to substitute a subscription, as if a coin could ever be an equivalent for a man—a living man. They wanted the Lord's freemen to work in the Lord's service. Everything around them seemed to tell them of personal responsibility, and if they looked at their Master's life they saw how pervaded it was with the sense of responsibility to His Father. He had given them talents which they must use for Him, and so lay them out, that they should bring the gold of holy character and the pearls gathered by their hands to sparkle in the Redeemer's Crown. (Loud applause.)

The hymn, "Shine, mighty God, on Britain shine," was then sung, and the collection taken. The Rev. Dr. EDMOND having briefly addressed the meeting, the Bishop of Gloucester pronounced the benediction.

ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN MISSIONS.—The annual meeting of the foreign missions of the Presbyterian Church of England was held on Wednesday evening, at Exeter Hall, under the presidency of Mr. J. C. Stevenson, M P. According to the report, there were forty-nine native evangelists and twenty-seven students to the ministry, the districts occupied by the missionaries being Amoy, Swatow, and Formosa. The income of the society was 9 402*l.*, while the expenditure amounted to 9,022*l.* The chairman in opening the proceedings, trusted the result of the gathering would deepen in all of them the sense of the importance of the great and honourable work in which their church was engaged. They were able to do their missionary labours by means of their own Church organisation, which was a great advantage, because all its members also belonged to the missionary society. They now looked with confidence to the future, as regarded the large fields of heathenism that had not yet been reached in China. Their mission was not only to the heathen, but also to the Jews. The Rev. Theodore Meyer, missionary to the Jews, then gave a detailed account of his labours. Dr. Donald Fraser said that events were now occurring in the East in which a marvellous and an ancient people, the Jews, who were dwelling among them, would be greatly interested. There were many signs of spiritual coldness and doubt among the Jews, but in them there was a kindling desire for the restoration of their national existence and of the possession of that land which was given to their fathers. (Hear, hear.) One of England's greatest writers had surprised most of her admirers by giving prominence to this in "Daniel Deronda." The events that were now transpiring in the East could not but have the effect of altering the political conditions of those regions. The Rev. Hugh Ritchie, a missionary from Formosa, stated there were 12,000 members of the Church on the main land at China and a similar number at Formosa. The Rev. Daniel M'Ewan, D.D., referred with pleasure to the success of their mission in China, greatly brought about, he said, by the labours of earnest and thoughtful missionaries. It was an incalculable blessing, because it opened up to them a spiritual life, and showed that they had a bond of communion between them. The field itself was one of great attraction, and enlisted their sympathy, because the Chinese Empire had such immense territory, comprising one-ninth of the land area of the globe, and with its hundred of millions of people, with its ancient civilisation, with its singular history, it might in the future exercise a powerful influence over the destinies of the world.

THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY ON DISESTABLISHMENT.—In a letter to the Archdeacon of Sarum and Wilts, the Bishop of Salisbury sketches the reforms in Convocation which he thinks necessary if the Church of England is still to be maintained. They consist of the substitution of one House for four, and the proper representation of the parochial clergy and the laity. He proceeds:—"Changes like these may seem very chimerical, and it may well be deemed hopeless to think of their being allowed by Parliament at any time that we can foresee. I fear it is so. Yet it is not less important that they should be stated and ventilated. Perhaps they are impossible as long as the Church remains established in its present constitution. But disestablishment—or, what is far worse than disestablishment, the loss of vital truth, and of all the most precious elements of learning, piety, and devotion in the Establishment—is not an imaginary danger. Measures like these which I have tried to suggest might ward off disestablishment; or, if God in His Providence allows that great evil to fall upon us, they might suggest the principles upon which the Church, detached from State control, might gather up her powers, and strengthen herself for her sacred work under new and less favourable conditions."

THE BULWARK OF PROTESTANTISM AGAIN.—The *South London Observer* reports that at a service in connection with the Church of England Working Men's Society, at All Saints, New Cut, on Tuesday, May 1st, the vicar, Dr. Lee, in a sermon referring to the present state of ecclesiastical affairs, denounced "the Court of Lord Penzance as a blasphemous and odious farce, a scandal upon Christendom, lost in the darkness of a well-thumbed Protestantism, a Court as odious as it was disgusting. By that Court the Catholic Church had been led to suffer bitterly, but the intercession of the saints would not be forgotten on her behalf. The dark shadow of Protestant heresy was overhanging the Church. Omens were to be seen all around—the Burials Bill was one, and unless men chose to follow the example of the ostrich, and to think that because they saw no danger there *was* no danger, they would surely admit that the time had arrived when the weak folk should be sifted out and the faithful rally round the standard of the Cross. The Board School system again had thrown out, Mary, ever blessed Mother of God, and the Paraclete also," &c., &c.

MR. GLADSTONE'S RESOLUTIONS, which may be convenient for reference, are as follows:—"That this House finds just cause of dissatisfaction and complaint in the conduct of the Ottoman Porte with regard to the despatch written by the Earl of Derby on the 21st of September, 1876, and relating to the massacres in Bulgaria. 2. That until such conduct shall have been essentially changed and guarantees on behalf of the subject populations other than the promises or ostensible measures of the Porte shall have been provided, that Government will be deemed by this House to have lost all claim to receive either the material or the moral support of the British Crown. 3. That in the midst of the complications which exist, and the war which has actually begun, this House earnestly desires the influence of the British Crown in the counsels of Europe to be employed with a view to the early and effectual development of local liberty and practical self-government in the disturbed provinces of Turkey, by putting an end to the oppression which they now suffer without the imposition upon them of any other foreign dominion. 4. That, bearing in mind the wise and honourable policy of this country in the Protocol of April, 1826, and the Treaty of July, 1827, with respect to Greece, this House furthermore earnestly desires that the influence of the British Crown may be addressed to promoting the concert of the European Powers in exacting from the Ottoman Porte, by their united authority, such changes in the Government of Turkey as they may deem to be necessary for the purposes of humanity and justice, for effectual defence against intrigue, and for the peace of the world. 5. That an humble Address, setting forth the prayer of this House, according to the tenor of the foregoing resolutions, be prepared and presented to Her Majesty."

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The Nonconformist.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 1877.

SUMMARY.

THE war news of the week relates more to the gigantic preparations on either side then to actual conflicts. A great force of Russians, estimated at from 80,000 to 100,000 men, is on the Roumanian side of the Danube, which river is in so swollen a state as to prevent active operations. The troops of the Czar occupy Galatz and Ibraila, at the mouth of that great river, and batteries have been planted on its banks; and although it has become dangerous for heavy ironclads to ascend the stream, the Turkish gunboats operate with comparative impunity, spite of the multitude of torpedoes laid down. How far torpedoes will prove to be really destructive instruments of warfare remains to be seen. As was expected, the position of Roumania has become more embarrassing in consequence of the convention with Russia. The agent of that Principality has been dismissed from Constantinople; the Porte officially condemns its vassal; and matters have already come to such a pass that across the Danube the Turkish artillery is bombarding Kalafat and the Roumanian guns have fired upon Widdin. Evidently the Russian commander-in-chief, the Grand Duke Nicholas, is in no haste to make a decisive movement, but when—if ever—he does cross the Danube, it will be near its mouths into the Dobrudsha; in expectation of which event the Turks are laying waste the entire district.

It is in Asia Minor that military operations are most active, although, the telegraphic wires being cut, reliable information is very meagre. In this region the Ottoman troops are on the defensive, their number being quite inadequate to resist for any length of time the Russian invasion. Mukhtar Pasha has been obliged to retire as the enemy advanced; and the fortress of Kars has been isolated and invested, but an attempt to take it by a *coup de main*, and storm the citadel, has failed. It is supposed that the Russians, leaving there a large investing force, will advance with the bulk of their army to Erzeroum with a view to meet Mukhtar Pasha, or force him to retire and leave open the passes to the invaders. It is clear that one of the chief objects of the campaign in Asia is to get possession of Batoum, which is, however, protected more by the Turkish ironclads in the bay than by its own fortifications. The signal defeat of the Turks in Asia Minor is more than possible, though the report that in such an event the Porte will at once propose to treat for peace, may be no more than an unfounded rumour.

The attitude of other nations relative to the war has not materially altered. As explained both in the Austrian and Hungarian Chambers, the attitude of the Vienna Cabinet is one of neutrality and observation. Austria is prepared to mobilise her forces if the need arises; but is at present quiescent. That passive mood will no doubt be changed when a considerable Russian army has crossed the Danube. If that movement should be successfully accomplished, Bosnia and Herzegovina will be occupied by Austrian troops as a precautionary measure. The Montenegrins also are doing nothing, though ready for active war; Servia still maintains a pacific attitude, though greatly pressed to sign a convention with Russia; the Greeks can hardly be restrained from rushing to arms, which would have the effect of bringing a Turkish squadron to the Piræus; and as to Egypt, the Khedive has promised to send a further contingent of troops to Constantinople when he can, but the continued troubles in Abyssinia frustrate his intention, and we have an authoritative statement that Russia has no thought of taking action in that quarter, still less of menacing British interests in the Suez Canal. In fact, the Northern Power would obviously be satisfied with a series of successes in Asia Minor leading to peace negotiations, and willingly be saved from the necessity of crossing the Danube with its serious and unknown risks.

Upon the opening of the great debate on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions we have spoken below. It is still proceeding, and is unlikely to be brought to a close before Friday night, when a test division will be taken on the first resolution, upon which the right hon. gentleman will be supported by the full strength of the Opposition. The interest in the discussion has necessarily lessened now that it is known that the peace party in the British Cabinet is in the ascendant. It is manifest from the tone of Lord Derby's reply to Prince Gortschakoff's Circular — which no other Government has thought it needful formally to notice, which has put the Turks in good spirits, and which lays the basis for ulterior action, or it is meaningless—that we should ere long have drifted into war against Russia but for the decisive action taken by Mr. Gladstone, and the significant and universal demonstrations throughout the country in his support. For the present, the crisis is over; the "howling of Bedlam" has abated; and we are not called upon to regard as probable "the maddest and most criminal thing that a British Government could do"—as Mr. Carlyle has expressed it—viz., to plunge us into war to suit the policy of "our miraculous Premier." This may be gathered from the pacific speech of Mr. Cross, one of the anti-war members of the Cabinet, who on Monday night distinctly announced that neither Turkey nor Russia would receive from us either moral or material support; that the Government would do their best to localise and minimise the war; and would only interfere if British interests were threatened at certain points, such as the Suez Canal, Egypt, and the free passage of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. While the conflict is going on between the belligerent Powers, there has also been a struggle at home between the representatives of military and sordid material interests and the intellect, moral sense, and philanthropy of England. Happily, the latter has been victorious.

The ecclesiastical warfare that rages in France and Italy, and which is carried on in the interests of Ultramontanism, takes a new turn in consequence of the action of the Italian Senate. The merits of the controversy at Rome were clearly stated by Mr. Richard, M.P., in his address at the meeting of the Congregational Union yesterday. It now appears that the Government bill for dealing with abuses committed by the clergy, after having passed through its several stages, and been considerably modified, was thrown out by a majority of thirteen. This defeat is a severe blow to the Depretis Cabinet and the Liberal party in Italy, and will give a new stimulus to Papal fanaticism throughout Europe.

Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the agent of the Home Government in South Africa, making use of the reserved powers entrusted to him, has declared that the Transvaal Republic is annexed to the Queen's dominions, and the British flag has been raised at Pretoria. President Burgers protested against the act, but recommended the Boers to submit; and thus a territory as large as Italy comes into our unwilling possession. It seems that the alternative was British interference or a sanguinary war with the native races (300 000 souls), in which the cowardly Boers and the European settlers, who together number only some 25,000 persons, might have been exterminated.

THE DEBATE ON THE EASTERN QUESTION.

THE question whether Mr. Gladstone was well advised in withdrawing at the last moment his third and fourth resolutions can hardly be decided by the abstract merits of those resolutions themselves. His object was partly educational in a political sense—that is, the development of national opinion—and partly tactical, so far as he wished to obtain as strong a vote as possible against any possible encouragement of Turkey in looking to England, under any circumstances whatever, for support. What was the proportionate importance assigned in his own view to those two aims we can only judge from his speech. Mr. Chamberlain spoke with strict accuracy when he said that three-fourths of the speech was devoted to the resolutions practically withdrawn. And this suggests that the main object was—what indeed was all that would be achieved in the present condition of the House of Commons—such a manifesto to the country as should at once consolidate and declare to the whole world the deep and heartfelt conviction of the people at large that our true policy is neither to support the Ottoman despotism nor to encourage Russian ambition, but to favour any European combination which would insist on the neutralisation of the provinces by the establishment of self-government in them. Now this object had already to a very considerable extent been secured by the enormous number of enthusiastic meetings held throughout the country in support of the resolutions, and culminating in that magnificent demonstration of popular feeling at St. James's Hall on Monday night, the like of which has never been witnessed, except in supreme moments of national crisis. Under these circumstances, we think Mr. Gladstone scarcely deserves the harsh condemnation with which he has been visited by some sections of sub-gangway Liberalism for his sacrifice of mere form in the interest of Liberal union. No doubt there are occasions when a pioneer of advanced principles is bound to go into the lobby if he can only find another to act as teller. But this was not one of them. That Mr. Gladstone has the nation at his back must be abundantly clear to the Government itself. It is not a case of an opinion in advance of the times, but of a national feeling accidentally misrepresented in the House. And it might have seemed a mere piece of Quixotism, unjustified by any practical object, to have exhibited that part of the House most nearly in accord with national opinion as attenuated to impotence by disagreement about a form of words, or about the most opportune moment for action.

Perhaps what is most to be regretted about the withdrawal of the more positive resolutions was the scene of confusion, little in accord with the usual self-control of Parliament, to which it gave rise on Monday. It cannot be denied that the more advanced members of the Liberal party were as much disappointed at this course as the Government, though for very different reasons. They wanted to proclaim a distinct and complete policy at any expense of division. The Government wanted to exhibit their opponents as a chaotic collection of atoms agitated by mutual repulsion. And the two-fold discontent thus arising was increased through misunderstandings caused by Mr. Gladstone's wish to have it clearly understood that, though he was not going to move the resolutions, he intended to maintain their policy. Two hours were spent in disorderly wrangling; and the tone of the House was so feverish and irritable that it might have seemed beyond the power of any oratory to recall it to a sense of its Imperial position, and to concentrate its attention on any great question of State. But it is just under such difficulties that genius displays its highest qualities. Never, perhaps, had Mr. Gladstone a more inspiring theme, and certainly never did he make a finer effort. Throughout he was animated by a high tone of moral indignation at the ignominy to which this country has stooped in its alliance with Turkey. But he was as lucid in his analysis of the mistakes of the Government as though he had been a clever lecturer explaining some phenomenon of natural history. He proved that England had been the sole obstacle to unanimity in the decisions of the Conference. He pointed out the gross inconsistency between isolated utterances of the Ministry, such as Lord Derby's famous scolding despatch, and the "delicate attention" by which Sir Henry Elliot is succeeded by an ambassador yet more deeply pledged if possible to the identification of the protection of the Porte with the interests of England. He showed that the policy of the Government had been precisely adapted to combine all the three evils of discouraging the oppressed Christians, sustaining the Turks in suicidal infatuation, and forcing Russia into a position very trying even to the severest national virtue. The satirical passage in which he rebuked the unpatriotic arrogance that makes our only policy national selfishness, was saved from flippancy by the greatness of the passion it thinly disguised; and the concluding appeal made to the traditional claim of England to be the champion of oppressed weakness ought to reach every heart in the country.

Mr. Cross, in a reply which only exhibited that painful spectacle—a good man trying to

make the best of a bad cause, argued that the meetings held everywhere during the last week meant nothing, because the people had not been asked, "Will you go to war?" Surely this is scarcely fair. It implies that Mr. Gladstone's policy is one of war. But what attracts the country to it is a conviction that a concert of European Powers would mean peace; and not peace for ourselves only, but peace where war of the foullest and most wicked kind has been waged by the strong against the weak for generations past. As to Mr. Cross's saying that the policy of the Government has two aims—the cessation of Turkish cruelties and the prevention of its foreign occupation—it is as though a man, far from any shelter on a rainy day, should say that he was determined on two things—not to get his clothes wet, and not to put up his umbrella. The tone of the Congregational Union meeting when the Eastern Question was brought forward showed how intolerable this profession of combining two mutually destructive aims is becoming to average Englishmen. Mr. Richard, whose long consistency through good report and through evil report gives him a right to speak with authority, felt it necessary to utter a note of warning on what seemed the bellicose tendencies of an assembly excited by indignation against cruelty. But of the resolution declaring the highest sense of Mr. Gladstone's service to the nation and the world in this matter he expressed his hearty approval. That the withdrawal of half the resolutions, of which notice had been given, sends something of a chill through the enthusiasm of the country was apparent in the proceedings of that assembly. But we fancy that they have already done their work in the manifestation and consolidation of a public opinion with which no Government will dare to trifle.

LORD DERBY'S REPLY TO PRINCE GORTSCHAKOFF'S CIRCULAR.

THE reply to the Circular of the Russian Government announcing their abandonment of all attempts at a peaceful solution of the Eastern difficulty was published on Monday. It is dated May 1, and its terms were, no doubt, settled at the Cabinet meeting held on that day, and reflect the sentiments and intentions of the Ministry, or of that section of it which was dominant at that time. It is, therefore, worth examining with care, and we believe the effect of a close scrutiny of its terms will be to confirm the worst apprehensions of the danger we are in of being involved by the present Government in a war with Russia.

The despatch may be regarded in two aspects—as a controversial reply to the Russian Circular, and as to its intended and probable influence on the relations of the two nations. The latter is incomparably the more important, but the former is worth consideration; for the way a man argues is often an admirable key to his prepossessions and intentions. And the first reflection that occurs on reading the despatch in connection with the Russian Circular is, that there was no occasion for any controversy at all; and that Lord Derby has treated as an argument what was merely a statement of the resolution adopted by the Russian Government, and of the reasons on which it was based. In order to perceive the mischievousness of this error, it is necessary to review the circumstances under which the Protocol was signed. Count Schouvaloff stated to Lord Derby early in March that after the sacrifices Russia had made, she could not disarm without having obtained "some tangible result as regards the improvement of the condition of the Christian populations of Turkey. The Emperor was sincerely desirous of peace, but not of peace at any price." Russia, therefore, proposed that a Protocol should be signed affirming the common interest of the Powers in the promised reforms, and their intention to watch over their execution. The Porte absolutely rejected the Protocol in every particular; and Prince Gortschakoff in his Circular, after recapitulating the various attempts which had been made to procure the adhesion of the Porte to the recommendations of the Powers, announced that in the opinion of the Russian Government this last refusal rendered all attempts at conciliation hopeless, and that the Emperor had resolved to "obtain by force what the unanimous attempts of the Cabinets had failed to obtain by persuasion." We presume that no one would deny that this was a decision perfectly within the competence of the Russian Government. The most strained interpretation of the Treaty of Paris would hardly make it necessary for Russia not only to seek the mediation of the other Powers—a condition she may, with some reason, say she has complied with—but to ask their permission before declaring war. However insufficient we might think the reasons alleged by her, they called for no argumentative reply from us. It was only necessary to express our dissent from the conclusions drawn, and especially from the clause in which the conviction was expressed that in taking this step the Emperor was consulting the views and interests of Europe. This, of course, called for a firm and courteous disclaimer from the English Government, and nothing more.

But not only does Lord Derby dispute every statement made in the Russian Circular—which was unnecessary, and therefore irritating, and therefore unwise—but he does it in the most needlessly offensive way. He charges the Russian Government and the Emperor personally, with deliberate bad faith, because, in his opinion, their present action is in contravention of their engagement, under the Treaty of Paris, to respect the independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The question naturally arises—Why is this criticism made now for the first time (so far as we know) when the resolution of the Russian Government has been taken and is irrevocable? But to turn to the substance of the accusation, can it possibly be maintained that the action of the Russian Government is an actual infringement of the clause of the Treaty of Paris referred to? For what would this interpretation involve? That none of the Great Powers can ever have the right of declaring war on Turkey except with the consent of all the co-signataries, and, therefore, of Turkey herself! Such an interpretation refutes itself, and is besides implicitly opposed to the provision that in case any dispute shall arise between the Porte and one of the other Powers, the mediation of the other signataries shall be sought before recourse is had to arms. It will be time to reproach Russia with an infringement of the independence and territorial integrity of Turkey when we find her severing provinces from the control of the Porte, and erecting them into independent states, or incorporating them with others or with her own. Even if the accusation had a more solid foundation than it has, it would have been well to recollect that the construction to be placed on treaty obligations necessarily varies with circumstances. Lord Derby himself, not so very long ago, regretted that the misconduct of Turkey might render it impossible for us to fulfil our treaty obligations to her. A strict interpretation of the Tripartite Treaty, would compel us to declare war on Russia now, at the summons of Austria; and Turkey considers the Protocol which we signed as a violation of the Treaty of Paris.

It is difficult to regard the accusation of bad faith thus directed against Russia but as a deliberate affront, intended to embitter the relations between the two Governments, and to pave the way for further measures. This impression is strengthened by a phrase which occurs in the last paragraph of the despatch: "*It is impossible to foresee the consequences of such an act.*" Of course, it is impossible! It is impossible to foresee all the consequences of any act; but it is only too easy to forecast the probable results of using such a phrase in such a document. How will it be read in Russia? As a threat. It *is* a threat, and it is impossible not to see in it the operation of that malign and fatal influence which throughout this unhappy history has resisted every effective measure which has been proposed till it was too late to employ it, has rejected every means of fostering a good understanding with Russia, and seized every opportunity of exciting on both sides an ignoble pride, jealousy, and suspicion. This despatch, in our opinion, distinctly adds to the danger of our being involved in war, and if any justification were needed for Mr. Gladstone's resolutions it is here. It cannot fail to produce deep and excusable anger in Russia, and every feeling of this kind adds to the chances of war. Nations seldom go to war because there is anything in the nature of things to compel war. They do so almost invariably because popular feeling by slow and almost imperceptible increments of anger and dislike, drives nations forward into a position in which they cannot remain stationary, and from which they will not retire. It is thus war becomes unavoidable. This is our danger—a danger which this despatch disastrously increases. Mr. Cross's speech on Monday may be an indication that it is less imminent than it seemed a few days ago. But Mr. Cross is not the leading spirit of the Ministry; while his earnestness, sincerity, and love of peace make him a convenient stalking-horse. But so long as Lord Beaconsfield is at the head of affairs, the danger may recur at any moment, and it behoves all who believe that honour and justice would be outraged by such a war to be on the alert.

SKETCHES FROM THE GALLERY.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, Monday night.

The business of the House of Commons was, up to the end of last week, overshadowed by the prospect of the debate which opened to-night. The business on the paper was not of great importance, and the usual round of questions and notices which form a prominent feature in the evening's entertainment at Westminster had for the most part reference to the resolutions. Much speculation was going on as to the precise issue upon which the debate would be raised. At the outset, Sir Drummond Wolff and Sir John Lubbock, in due order, gave notice that they would move "the previous question." As one of these hon. baronets is a moderately independent member of the Conservative side, and the other is not a strong politician who sits on the Liberal benches, the House was mystified by an arrangement which might or might not have the approval of the front benches. The air was also thick with rumours of a vote of confidence, which, sweeping aside this temporising amendment of the "previous question," should lay a bold issue before the House. It appeared quite natural that the Ministry, which has always been rather clamouring to have the question of confidence or no confidence brought to the issue of a vote, should seize this favourable opportunity of deciding it.

Thus matters progressed till Friday night, when the problem was solved in a manner which, quite apart from the issue at stake, was interesting, not to say charming. In the first place Sir Drummond Wolff, being questioned as to his intention by Sir Harcourt Johnstone, rose and declared that what he chiefly had at heart was the national interests, and that, believing the time was not opportune for discussing Mr. Gladstone's resolutions, he had given notice of moving the previous question. But whether the motion should be made by himself or by Sir John Lubbock, was a matter of no consequence. Then the hon. baronet rose from the other side and protested that it was of no consequence to him whether he moved his amendment or whether Lord Elcho, who in the meantime had given notice of a vote of confidence, had precedence. Indeed Sir John rather hinted that the Government would do well to accept Lord Elcho's amendment; a view subsequently enforced by Mr. Gladstone, who, burning with premonitory signs of excitement, challenged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to let a direct issue be taken in the face of the country on the great question which had been raised.

Nothing could be more amusing than all this—Mr. Gladstone's passionate earnestness giving the last touch that was needed to the success of the comedy. Everybody in the House knew that what the Opposition wanted was that, instead of the previous question—the putting of which would divide the party—a question of a vote of confidence should be substituted, behind which the Opposition could be drawn up as in the rear of a stone wall. No one knew this better than the Ministers; and about the last thing they were likely to do would be to oblige the Opposition by changing the issue on which the vote would be taken. An additional advantage to them would be that the fatal amendment should be moved from the side of the House on which the question had been raised. Hence Sir Drummond Wolff's bland deference to Sir John Lubbock; hence Sir John Lubbock's timid suggestion that perhaps the Government would like to take up Lord Elcho's amendment; and hence Mr Gladstone's few words of appeal, almost terrible in the suppressed passion that they evinced, and by which the great statesman and orator, rising above party tactics, and grandly scornful of the small imputation sure to follow upon his suggestion, appealed to the Ministry to come forth from behind the ramparts which had been obligingly thrown up for them, and fight it out in the open plain. There was a simplicity in this proposal which greatly amused the Tories, some of whom find it difficult to raise their souls above the level of party manœuvres.

Beyond these incidents connected with the grand drama opening to-night there is not much to record. Thursday night was taken up chiefly with the Universities Bill in committee, which continues to excite the laborious attention of a few hon. members, and is fled from by far the larger number of our legislators. The fruit of considerable discussion on Thursday night was that Clause 16 was passed, which highly gratified Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who now regards the bill as having made substantial progress. On Friday night some miscellaneous business, chiefly of a personal character, came before

the House, Mr. Sullivan bringing forward the case of Mr. Anckatell, and Mr. Cowen calling attention to the grievance of Colonel de Faby, who was expelled from Guernsey in a manner unfamiliar to English customs. Major O'Gorman, who is now fully restored to the House, was good enough to create a little diversion in an otherwise dull evening, by relating in connection with Mr. Sullivan's case how he had himself been deprived of the commission of the peace. His narrative had no special bearing on the case, but the Major is always welcome, and considering he spoke before dinner, he made a great success. Mr. Biggar was not behind in distinguishing himself throughout the evening, for when Mr. Goldney rose to move for a select committee to consider the best means of facilitating the despatch of public business, Mr. Biggar showed how it might be achieved by succeeding in counting out the House.

The stars in their courses fight against Sisera. It was expected that Mr. Gladstone would to-night appear fresh before an unwearied audience to make a great speech, for which he had had a fair opportunity of preparation. The House was densely crowded at half-past four, but Mr. Gladstone, entering from behind the Speaker's chair, was allowed unnoticed to take his seat. He was, however, loudly cheered from below the gangway on the Liberal side when he rose to answer a question put to him by Mr. Trevelyan as to the course he proposed to take with respect to his Resolutions. The hon. member for the Border Burghs wanted to know whether Mr. Gladstone would make an alteration, chiefly verbal, in his second resolution; and, secondly, whether he would refrain from putting his third and fourth resolution. There had been rumours of a patching up of the breach in the front Opposition bench, and the Conservatives, seeing in this movement from below the gangway an attempt to take the plum out of their mouths, displayed their vexation in a series of groans and sneers and noisy bursts of laughter which were specially designed to rouse the anger of Mr. Gladstone, and so place him at a disadvantage. He was calm enough when answering Mr. Trevelyan's questions, agreeing in the main with that gentleman's propositions. But after the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given his own version of the circumstances which had landed the House in what he was pleased to call an undignified position, Mr. Gladstone altogether lost his temper, and there was presented the sad spectacle of the greatest orator and perhaps the most beneficent statesman of the age, at the mercy of a few noisy and not supremely intelligent men, strong in the consciousness of overwhelming numerical strength. In the end Mr. Gladstone was called to order by the Speaker, a fortuitous interruption which gave him the opportunity of recovering the balance of his mind; and, after a scene, prolonged by the absurd persistence of Mr. Bentinck, who wanted to make a speech which the House did not desire to hear, Mr. Gladstone found the opening, just two hours late, of moving his resolutions. This he did in a speech which suffered greatly by the circumstances of delay, one particular effect of which was that he rose to speak in full dinner-hour. He spoke with all his usual energy, and occasionally something more than his average eloquence, and when he sat down, at half-past nine, was rewarded with a prolonged burst of cheering from the Opposition benches.

The London correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* adds some details relative to the remarkable event of Monday night, which will be found interesting:—"Mr. Gladstone entered from behind the Chair a few minutes after half-past four o'clock, and was received by the Opposition with a cheer so slight that, with the resounding shouts of the throng in Palace-yard still ringing in his ears, the right hon. gentleman could hardly have heard it. In a very short time afterwards Mr. Trevelyan put his question to Mr. Gladstone, and thereupon commenced a commotion which continued unabated for the next two hours. The inquiry and Mr. Gladstone's reply, accepting the amendment and abandoning his third and fourth resolutions, were received by the Conservatives not merely with ironical laughter, but with yells of derision. Many on the Opposition side also seemed to be annoyed, and the vexation of extreme parties was increased by Lord Hartington's appeal to Sir John Lubbock, proving as it did that the difference amongst the chiefs of the Liberals had been removed. A sense of the ridiculous began to grow upon the House as suspicion of prearrangement spread; and Sir John Lubbock himself, in stating that he would not now move the previous question, could not altogether resist the contagious laughter of the majority of the assemblage. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was in high feather at the turn of events. Such sprightly banter as he bestowed upon Mr. Gladstone he has never indulged in before; but he marred the effect of his sarcasm by insinuating that Mr. Gladstone might not after all fulfil his promise to accept amendments. This of course, brought up Mr. Gladstone in a state of indignation; and after an absurd episode in which Mr. Percy Wyndham and Mr. G. Bentinck convulsed the House by their eccentric movements in the hope of gaining precedence and catching the Speaker's eye, he entered a very strong protest against Sir S. Northcote's language, and was about to fix on the Government the responsibility for placing the House in a ridiculous position when an obstacle was raised on a point of order. His emphatic demonstration that the Government had all the year professed anxiety for a declaration of policy from the Opposition was interrupted by Mr. Roebuck, whose objection of irrelevancy was, of course, sustained. Then, a Mr. Percy Wyndham kept his seat, Mr. Bentinck got a chance of expressing his ardent desire that the debate on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions would not proceed; but the excitement showed no sign of subsiding. Every time one speaker sat down some half-dozen honourable gentlemen rose to take his place in addressing the House, and as the wrangle went on confusion increased. Mr. Chaplin, with an excusable desire to say something severe of Mr. Gladstone said, the resolutions by alteration had become 'effete;' and Mr. Hardy, hinting at a 'rehearsal' and a 'farce,' sneeringly implied that there was nothing left in them, and so brought down upon himself a sharp retort from Mr. Gladstone, who wanted to know why, if the resolutions were so unobjectionable, the Government would not accept them. Again, the resolutions were described as 'milk and water,' and presently it became apparent that in healing one split another had been opened between the Liberals above and below the gangway. The first to express dissatisfaction was Mr. Courtney, but Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. E. Jenkins followed in the same line; and finally Mr. Sullivan, reproaching Mr. Gladstone with deserting those who had stood by him throughout, complained bitterly of the 'compact which had been made.' It was scarcely necessary for him to point out the dangers of a change of front in face of the enemy, for its effect was sufficiently apparent, and the Conservatives continued openly to rejoice over the palpable dissensions amongst their opponents. For a long time it seemed probable that the debate would be shelved by a refusal to postpone the orders of the day, but after an immense deal of pother and hubbub matters were with difficulty arranged, and at seven o'clock Mr. Gladstone found the way open to him to move his first resolution. When he rose he was hailed by the Opposition with a cheer so loud that it appeared to come from an entirely united party. Mr. Gladstone occupied exactly two hours and a-half in the delivery of a masterly address delivered in his best style. Once more he exposed the cruel treatment by the Turks of their Christian subjects, and his criticism of the 'expostulating' policy of the Government was sharper than on previous occasions. Incidentally he made it clear that he believed the Cabinet but for the Premier would have pursued a different course; and, finding time in his progress to deal with matters small as well as great, he vigorously took Sir John Holker to task for his abusive speech, a quotation from which elicited loud groans from the Liberals. In conclusion, the right hon. gentleman combined a vindication of the cause of oppressed Christians with a most earnest appeal to the Government on their behalf in a beautiful and touching peroration, which drew from the Opposition cheers sonorous and prolonged. From beginning to end Mr. Gladstone had held in rapt attention a large audience. The speech as a whole made a deep impression, and suffered in no respect from the ridiculous occurrences which had preceded its delivery. A lull followed, during which the House cleared, and Sir H. Wolff and Mr. Chamberlain respectively made speeches on opposite sides of the question. But soon Mr. Cross sprang into the arena, and, to the astonishment of an audience which rapidly became very large, developed a combative faculty and a spirit of pugnacity which few had suspected to be concealed in his usually placid bosom. He made a capital reply to Mr. Gladstone from the Government point of view, and showed himself almost a better champion of the Ministry than either the War Secretary or the leader of the House.

"The crisis in the Liberal party may be now regarded as ended. The changed situation has been mainly brought about by Earl Granville, and another important fact has presented itself in the attitude of Mr. John Bright. The leaders of the Liberal party held a meeting at Earl Granville's on Saturday night after the Royal Academy dinner, and it was then reported to them that, out of consideration for preserving the unity of the party, Mr. Gladstone would make the proposed changes in his resolutions. So far back as Friday last I hinted that this was the only course to prevent a split in the Liberal ranks; but knowing what had already transpired with that object, I had little hope of anything being done. Earl Granville's perseverance, and the shower of letters which fell upon Mr. Gladstone from private members, had the desired effect, though for reasons best known to themselves the leaders of the party preserved the compromise as a profound secret until this afternoon. Now that the debate has got into straight sailing it is expected to occupy two more nights. The division will be taken on Sir H. D. Wolff's amendment, and the Liberal party will come out of it a united body."

Literature.

*MR. MARTIN ON THE REVENUES OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT.**

This work will be held to have a peculiar value. Brought out under the auspices of a society having for its object the separation of the Church from the State, and its contents bearing directly upon the question of disendowment, it is yet written with the entire impartiality of a professed statistician. So impartial, indeed, is the tone, so entirely does the author ignore all the controversies that are waging around him, that some very ardent disputants on both sides may perhaps feel some little disappointment at its want of colour. But it was just such a work as this which the Committee of the Liberation Society wished to secure—a work which would possess equal authority both with State-Churchmen and Free-Churchmen. They were happy, therefore, in their selection of the author, and Mr. Martin's name will be a sufficient guarantee for the accuracy and completeness of his work.

Some of the information in this volume will, of course, not be new to our readers, but the author has a peculiarly fresh manner of placing even old statistics before his readers. How clear, for instance, although brief, is his account of the establishment and growth of episcopacy in England, bringing out just the facts that are necessary to be brought out—viz., that up to 1708 there were fewer bishops in England than there were in the time of the Saxons, while, at present, there are just only nine more than there were in the time of the Venerable Bede, eleven hundred years ago. His summary of the results of the Commission of Church Inquiry forty years ago is very complete, and even the history of the Ecclesiastical Commission is made clear. In connection with this, and with the mode adopted by the Commissioners of dealing with episcopal estates, Mr. Martin presents us with the first statement that has been published of the extent and value of the landed property of archbishops and bishops. The amount is given for every county; its aggregate extent is 30,233 acres, and its aggregate value 40,854*l.* It is curious, as Mr. Martin remarks, that the prelate most largely endowed is, strangely enough, the Bishop of St. Davids, who is returned as owning 6,583 acres of land, valued at 4,842*l.*—being 342*l.* more than his fixed income, the property being dispersed over six Welsh counties. Of course this is the landed property only; the remainder of the episcopal revenues, which amount altogether to nearly 160,000*l.*, is derived from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and other public sources.

Mr. Martin gives a similar table to the above concerning the cathedrals, from which it appears that the area of land at present possessed by deans and chapters is 68,838 acres, and the value 136,488*l.* Here again, of course, the total amount of the capitular incomes is not stated—a large proportion being derived from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. When we come to the last-named body, we obtain some further figures. The author says:—

> A comparisoon of the preceding table with that on page 39 giving, also on the authority of the "New Domesday Book," the landed endowments of the bishops, will show that the latter do not possess one-third of the lands of the deans and canons, and not one-fourth of the total value. The comparative figures are as follows:—

	Area of Land. Acres	Rd.	Pr.	Gross Estimated Rental. £	s.
Bishops . .	22,414	3	8	34,215	3
Deans and Canons	68,838	1	37	136,488	17
Total .	92,248	2	39	168,182	1

> It will be seen further on that the land owned by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in England and Wales amounts to close upon 150,000 acres, of the estimated value of upwards of 311,000*l.*, thus making the aggregate value of ecclesiastical property, inclusive of that of the bishops, deans, and canons, not far from half-a-million sterling. Probably, were the enormous value of the property within the metropolis, not recorded in the "New Domesday Book," to be added, the total would not fall far short of a million sterling.

Next come the parochial clergy, the number, classifications, and sources of income of which are given with great care. The total number given is 13,447, and the annual value in detail upwards of four millions—at the same that it is acknowledged further on, that this is necessarily an under-estimate, and therefore not a correct one.

Mr. Martin estimates the number of churches at about 16,000. The following quotation will show how carefully he has done his work:—

> The actual number of churches in existence may be

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* *The Property and Revenue of the English Church Establishment.* By FREDERICK MARTIN, Author of the "Statesman's Year Book." (Liberation Society.)

estimated after the returns of the "Clergy List" for 1876, and of "Crockford's Clerical Directory," at about 16,000—probably rather under than over this number. It was stated by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, in evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on the Public Worship Facilities Bill in 1875, that "within the last forty years there appears to have been 2,560 churches consecrated in England and Wales." This would give—adding the calculated number of new churches to those of the census report as existing in 1831, namely, 12 048, with allowance for four more years—less than 15,000 churches altogether; but it does not seem that the figures of the bishop were the result of a close investigation, but were offered merely as vague estimates. Another witness before the Parliamentary committee, the Rev. Robert Gregory, M.A., Canon of St. Paul's, presented statistics probably nearer the truth. Being asked the question, "Can you state what number of new churches have been built in the present century?" Canon Gregory made the precise reply: "In the present century, up to the end of the year 1873, there were 4210 churches consecrated in England and Wales." If this statement be accepted as correct, for which there are good grounds, the figures stand as follows:—

Number of churches existing at the census of 1801	11,548
Number of churches built from 1801 to the end of 1873	4,210
Total at the end of 1873 . . .	15,758

According to the evidence of Canon Gregory, the average number of churches erected annually from the commencement of the century to the end of the year 1873 was 58, so that in the three years from the end of 1873 to the end of 1876, there would be 174 new edifices built. Adding this figure to the total of the preceding statement, the total number of churches in existence at the end of 1876 would amount to 15 32. Thus there is very high probability for assuming that there are at present about 16,000 religious edifices belonging to the Church of England.

These figures, as well as the various proceedings under the Church Building Acts, have, as our readers know, an important bearing upon some moral aspects of disendowment, but these we do not now discuss. We are glad to see Mr. Martin recognising, fully, the growth of the voluntary principle in the Church, and that he does not avoid the really difficult subject of glebes. He states his inferences as follows:—

Perhaps the calculation would not be far from the truth that there are 10,000 benefices producing tithes (inclusive of lay impropriations) averaging 450*l.*—76*l.* less than the average returned for the diocese of Winchester—which would give a total of 4,500,000*l.* per annum. Assigning likewise an average of fifteen acres of glebe lands—being two acres less than that shown by the Winchester returns—to 10,000 benefices, the total would be 150,000 acres. The latter figure is, in all probability, a great understatement, and the same may be the case also as regards the value of the tithe.

This, of course, at once raises the value of the benefices beyond that already stated. The amount of land tithe-free and titheable is also referred to. The histories of the Ecclesiastical Commission and Queen Anne's Bounty are given at length. Of the former, after a detailed statement of revenues, the author says:—

The successive reports of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, from the first, bearing date June 24, 1845, to the twenty-eighth, issued in 1876, show nothing more clearly than the ever-increasing importance, both in wealth and extent of functions, of this singular body—unique in its way, and representing one of the most extraordinary means ever devised by the ingenuity of statesmen to reconcile opposing political and clerical interests. During the thirty years chronicled in the report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, they have slowly grown from mere builders and restorers of episcopal residences to the absolute rulers and managers of all secular concerns of the Church of England. To what an extent the sway has reached is shown by a mere glance over the long list of contents of the last report. It enumerates not only innumerable grants to the clergy (temporary and permanent), formation of new ecclesiastical districts, augmentation of benefices, conveyances of sites for churches, burial-grounds, and parsonages, but the yearly work registered enters into every branch and detail of ecclesiastical government, down to the authorising of the performances of the religious offices connected with births, deaths, and marriages. It is no more the priest, but the Ecclesiastical Commission, which accompanies man—the *civis Romanum*—"from the cradle to the grave."

And now, as to the real revenue of the Church Establishment, Mr. Martin's recapitulation is brief but effective. He gives the revenues of the bishops and the numbers and names of their palaces, the incomes of deans and canons, of collegiate churches, and finally, of the clergy, the whole being summarised in the following estimate:—

	Number.	Total Annual Income.
		£
Church dignitaries, including deans, &c.	172	347,000
Extra Cathedral Revenues . .	—	130,000
Beneficed Clergy	13,300	5,027,000
Net revenue of Queen Anne's Bounty	—	34,000
Total . . .	13,472	5,538,000
Net disposable income of the Ecclesiastical Commission . .	—	700,000
Building and repairing of churches	—	1,000,000
Total annual revenue . .	—	7,238,000

In summary, each of the 172 Church dignitaries has an average annual income of 2,000*l.*, and each of the 13,000 parochial incumbents has an average income, including value of glebe house, of 350*l.* To form the vaguest estimate of the annual income of the 10,266 clergymen of the Church of England, engaged as curates, teachers, chaplains, &c.—5,765 curates, 1,608 teachers, chaplains, &c., and 3,893 "unattached clergy" would be quite impossible, even were it not needless, since these 10,000 of the ordained servants of the Church form in so far no part of the Establishment, as they have no settled interest in its revenues. The net result of all the calculations here entered into is that this settled interest is represented by an annual revenue of a little over seven millions sterling.

That is the property with which we shall have one day to deal. We thank Mr. Martin for assessing it with such clearness and method as he has done in this work.

Correspondence.

THE BAPTIST UNION.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

DEAR SIR,—Will you kindly permit us to notify in your columns that, in future, contributions for the Baptist Union should be sent to the Rev. S. H. Booth, secretary of the Baptist Union; and contributions for the Baptist Home and Irish Missions to the Rev. J. H. Millard, B.A., Secretary of the British and Irish Home Missionary Society.

We are, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

Signed { SAMUEL HARRIS BOOTH. JAMES H. MILLARD.

19, Castle-street, Holborn, E.C., May 7, 1877.

LORD GRANVILLE'S RESOLUTION.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—Allow me to protest against the words "Christian" and "religious" in Lord Granville's amendment to the Burials Bill. Surely, if the churchyards are the property of the State, it is grossly unjust to exclude Secularists from the use of them. The Nonconformists can hardly be so illiberal as to support any plan which would at his death (*absit omen*) treat so brave a Reformer as Mr. Bradlaugh as a suicide.

Yours, etc.,
A RADICAL PARSON.

ITALY AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—The notions of "logical sequence" as to capital punishment in Italy (referred to by a correspondent) are those entertained by many of the ablest jurists and logicians of Europe and America. It is precisely their conclusion that "the greater number of murders in some provinces (or countries) *is* due to the law of capital punishment."

And facts, on a wide scale, show that this logical sequence is a sound one, practically. For the general experience of the countries which have abolished capital punishment has been an increased security for human life.

Nor is your correspondent altogether correct when he remarks that, "How many persons are prevented from committing violent crimes through fear of the law, is a question beyond human investigation." Not exactly so. For if, when certain laws are abrogated, it is found that the crimes against which they were previously directed have not increased, it is a fair conclusion that the existence of those laws had not been the real cause of restraint.

Yours truly,
London. W. TALLACK.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND INTEMPERANCE.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—A Committee of the House of Lords appointed for the purpose of "inquiring into the prevalence of habits of intemperance" has been sitting for the last three months. Its first report, with minutes of evidence, has now been presented in a bulky blue book of 350 pages, embodying the evidence given by the Head and Chief Constables of Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield; by Mr. Chamberlain, M.P., Mr. David Carnegie (the apostle of the Gothenburg system), and by other gentlemen; and their evidence supplies some deeply-interesting facts in regard to the prevalence of intemperance, to the licensing laws, and to recent experiments aiming at their amendment. Major Greig, of Liverpool, showsthat during his head-constableship, the number of public-houses have risen from 1,493 to 1,919, whilst the number of beerhouses had sunk in the same time from 897 to 334, in part through the operation of Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson's Act; and in the opinion of Major Greig, the drunkenness in Liverpool is now increasing—the increase of drinking among women going "hand-in-hand" with that of men in spite of the recent establishment of useful and appreciated "cocoa-shops." In the same gentleman's opinion there are "too many" public-houses in Liverpool; but his evidence in this latter respect can scarcely be said to be corroborated by that of Mr. Rathbone, the former chairman of the Liverpool bench, who draws the conclusion that "free licensing does not appear to have had the slightest effect in increasing the quantity of drunkenness in the town," and he points to the fact that there has been a diminution of the total number of drinking-houses, with a larger number of apprehensions as some proofs thereof. Others of his colleagues, however, contest the point, and the opinion of Mr. Caine especially is entitled to value when he states that the increase of drunkenness in Liverpool, actually and relatively, within the last fifteen years, is primarily due to the "increase of the facilities for drinking, the chief comparison in his opinion being to take not the number of public-houses so much as the amount of liquor therein consumed. Mr. Neilson, the chairman of the justices for the adjoining Prescot Division, still adheres to free licensing and stringent enforcement of penalties, in that large division, but finds that the want of police control over the beerhouses interferes with the good results. Mr. James Edward Davis, the legal adviser to the Commissioners of Metropolitan Police, puts in a table of apprehensions in London, showing that the percentage of apprehensions to the estimated population sank from 20·574 in 1831 irregularly down to 4·907 in 1867, since which it has increased, and last year was 7·676, but this is largely qualified by his statement that "the amount of actual drunkenness coming to the knowledge of the police in the course of a night has a very distant relation to the actual arrests"—the arrests only indicating the action of the police, which in the metropolis has been modified during that time. Mr. Davis, from experience in the Potteries, suggests that power should be given to relatives and employers of drunkards to give notice to publicans not to supply drink to men in work hours, with power to magistrates to license endorsements in case of neglect of such notice. Mr. F. A. Bremner, of Manchester, testifies to the benefits of restrictive licensing legislation in Manchester. His experience strongly inclines him to hold that it is desirable to diminish the number of places for the sale of intoxicants; he would give the inhabitants "some local option" in regard to the number of licences, he believes the public-house vaults to be "more injurious than the beerhouses," and he believes that out-door licences over which the magistrates have no control are a special evil. Captain Palin, chief constable of Manchester, hands in a series of figures which show that in that city the total apprehensions rose from 1,685 in 1857 to 9,612 last year—the latter number being less than in recent years, and to some extent corresponding with the number of beerhouses, which almost doubled in twenty years, and is now slightly less than it was. A special feature of the Manchester return is that the Sunday apprehensions are large—varying from twenty to fourteen per cent. of the whole, and there is a table which proves that only a fourth of the licensed victuallers and a sixth of the beer and wine houses have accommodation for travellers. Captain Palin believes in the restrictive policy, and would be glad to see the number of beerhouses lessened. Major Bond, of Birmingham, draws special attention to the evils of the club system, and to that by which persons may go to the outskirts of a town and demand drink as "travellers" in closed hours; and he is also of opinion that the limit of liquors purchased from wholesale dealers should be increased. We may next take the Chief Constable of Sheffield, Mr. Jackson, whose returns show a wider fluctuation in the extent of apprehensions for drunkenness than most—the numbers varying in thirty years from 777 to 1,622—the percentage to population, however, decreasing, but the percentage of females to the whole increasing largely.

The two remaining witnesses whose evidence is given are Mr. Chamberlain, M.P., and Mr. David Carnegie, and the chief subject they deal with is the Swedish licensing system. Mr. Chamberlain states his belief that, on the whole, drunkenness had increased in Birmingham; he thinks the powers of magistrates to repress drunkenness are so small that it is "hardly worth while to intensify the present influence of the publican upon" municipal elections to secure the transfer of such insufficient powers. He thinks that "powers should be given to municipalities who

would undertake the business, to obtain possession of the existing interests, and then to conduct the trade on the same conditions as the Gothenburg Company," whose working he gives a general idea of. In regard to Birmingham, Mr. Chamberlain thus puts the case: The corporation has obtained an order and scheme under the Artisans' Dwellings Act, under which they are dealing with ninety-three acres of house-covered land, inclusive of 120 places for the sale of drinks; and it wishes similar powers of purchase over all other places for the sale of drinks in the borough. Although in Gothenburg the Bolag or Spirit Company intervenes between the municipality and the townspeople, Mr. Chamberlain proposes to transfer the sale to the corporation, which he thinks would give greater security for the good conduct of the business. But the chief witness in regard to Gothenburg and its Bolag is Mr. David Carnegie, who from fifteen years' residence in Gothenburg sketches the use of the system of drink-sale known to exist there, and of the company conducting such sale, the firm with which Mr. Carnegie is connected is a member. In addition to the facts now generally known in relation to the Bolag, he adds a statement of the gradual reduction of the competition to which the company was exposed, by the lessening of the number of the licences to sell spirits for consumption off the premises; and he also states that the rents paid for the public-houses by the Bolag vary from 8*l.* to 180*l.* It is added, too, that there is now local control over the beerhouses which previously there had not been, and that it has been a question whether the company shall also take them. There have been, also, changes in the law, so that the various Bolags in the country—and there are now over fifty in Sweden—are obliged to give the whole of the profits to the community—a provision not previously made, though generally acted upon. It is stated, too, that the system had extended to, and is spreading in, the sister country of Sweden. In contrast to a recently published letter of our consul on the system, Mr. Carnegie quotes the testimony of the chief of the Gothenburg police, the governor of the town, the Bishop and Dean of Gothenburg, the Consular Chaplain, and the Chairmen of the Town Council, Chamber of Commerce, and Scandinavian Bank, in favour of the system. Dealing with the large increase in drunkenness in Gothenburg in recent years, or rather with the check to the decrease, and the rise towards the old level, Mr. Carnegie attributes it to the competition long allowed with the company's places of sale, to the very greatly enlarged prosperity of the community, and the rise of wages, as well as to the greatly-increased population. He replies to objections to the system: that it might promote jobbery, by remarking that it has not in Sweden; that Gothenburg consumes thrice the quantity of spirits per head that large Scotch towns do, by the statement that in one case the quantity is known, in the other assumed. He deals also at length with the objections of Consul Duff, but his replies can scarcely be summarised. He, as well as Mr. Chamberlain, acknowledges the difficulty which would be caused by the adoption of the Bolag system in a town and the probable extension of the public-house system outside its limits. It may be that the Committee, in eliciting the mass of fact and opinion which is now brought before the public, have only touched the fringe of a great question; but it has in one or two branches given a valuable contribution to our knowledge, not only of the state of some of our large towns in relation to drunkenness, but also it has given, in the evidence of Mr. Carnegie—not perhaps the clearest or the most connected, but certainly one of the most reliable statements in regard to the peculiar licensing system of Gothenburg; and the study of the blue-book embodying these may be well commended to all interested in licensing reform.

Yours, &c.,
J. W. S.

May 7, 1877.

PERFECTION.—Mrs. S. A. ALLEN'S World's Hair Restorer never fails to restore grey hair to its youthful colour, imparting to it new life, growth, and lustrous beauty. Its action is speedy and thorough, quickly banishing greyness. Its value is above all others. A single trial proves it. It is not a dye. It ever proves itself the natural strengthener of the hair. Sold by all Chemists and Perfumers.

Mrs. S. A. ALLEN *has for over 40 years manufactured these two preparations. They are the standard articles for the hair. They should never be used together, nor Oil nor Pomade with either.*

Mrs. S. A. ALLEN'S Zylo-Balsamum, a simple tonic and hair-dressing of extraordinary merit for the young. Premature loss of the hair, so common, is prevented. Prompt relief in thousands of cases has been afforded where hair has been coming out in handfuls. It cleanses the hair and scalp, and removes dandruff. Sold by all Chemists and Perfumers.

THOUSANDS are unable to take Cocoa because the varieties commonly sold are mixed with starch, under the plea of rendering them soluble; while really making them thick, heavy, and indigestible. This may be easily detected, for if cocoa thickens in the cup it proves the addition of starch. Cadbury's Cocoa Essence is genuine; it is therefore three times the strength of these cocoas, and a refreshing beverage like tea or coffee.

Births, Marriages, and Deaths.

MARRIAGES.

FIELD—BARON.—May 2, at the Independent Chapel, Weybridge, by the Rev. Dr. Aveling, John Kingsford, eldest son of the late John Kingsford Field, Esq., of Lambeth Marsh and Firgrove, Weybridge, to Mary Francoise (May), only daughter of the Rev. F. Baron, of Weybridge.

RANDALL, SPINK.—May 7, at Bridport, by the Rev. F. J. Austin, the Rev. U. B. Randall, M.A., of Beaminster, to Caroline, daughter of late Rev. S. Spink, of Dover.

DEATHS.

BAINES.—May 1, suddenly, at Westbrook, Horsforth, near Leeds, the residence of her brother-in-law, Jane, the beloved wife of George Baines, J.P., of Leicester. Friends will please to accept this (the only) intimation.

SMEDMORE.—May 3, at Jubilee-square, Swanage, Dorset, John Seymour, second son of the late Mr. Smedmore, Clarence Cottage, Swanage, aged 67.

GWYTHER.—On May 8, at 10, St. John's Villas, Upper Holloway, George Gwyther, Esq., late collector H.M.'s Customs, Dumfries, aged 80 years.

HORNIMAN'S TEA.—Choice teas at very reasonable prices are always to be had of Horniman's Agents; Chemists in every town. Being direct Importers, Messrs. Horniman guarantee the purity, strength, and flavour of all their teas. Their agents are constantly receiving fresh supplies from the Wholesale London House, secured in tinfoil packets, whereby the delicate flavour and aroma is preserved.

HOLLOWAY'S OINTMENT AND PILLS.—If the action of the skin be suppressed, internal congestion of the liver, stomach, and kidneys often results. This fact should be borne in mind during the spring months, when a bright sunny day tempts one to throw off clothing and neglect other precautions. Care must be exercised at this season of the year, and if unfortunately unpleasant symptoms arise, an alterative should at once be taken. Holloway's Pills soon relieve internal congestions of all kinds, and have a mild aperient effect on the bowels, without causing griping or undue purging; this renders them suitable for all persons, their mode of action being at once simple and yet thoroughly effective. They are thus confidently recommended.

CARDINAL ECRU, OR CREAM.—JUDSON'S DYES.—White goods may be dyed in five minutes. Ribbons, silks, feathers, scarfs, lace, braid, veils, handkerchiefs, clouds, bernouses, Shetland shawls, or any small article of dress, can easily be dyed without soiling the hands. Violet, magenta crimson, mauve, purple, pink, ponceau, claret, &c., Sixpence per bottle. Sold by Chemists and Stationers.

OLDRIDGE'S BALM OF COLUMBIA.—By the increasing demand for this famed Balm may be estimated its value and efficacy for replenishing, invigorating, and preserving the Hair either from falling off or turning grey. Without it no toilet is complete. It imparts to the hair a bright and glossy appearance, frees it entirely from scurf, and will not soil the most delicate fabric worn as headdress "at home" or in promenade. In the "nursery" its use is invaluable, as it forms in infancy the basis of a healthy and luxuriant head of hair. Sold by all perfumers and chemists, at 3s. 6d., 6s., and 11s. only. Wholesale and retail by the proprietors, C. and A. Oldridge, 22, Wellington-street, seven doors from the Strand, London, W.C.

KINAHAN'S LL WHISKY.—Universally recommended by the Medical Profession. A pure old spirit, mild, mellow, delicious, and most wholesome. Dr. Hassall says:—"The samples were soft and mellow to the taste, aromatic and ethereal to the smell. The Whisky must be pronounced to be pure, well matured, and of very excellent quality." Wholesale, 20, Great Titchfield-street, London, W.

FITS.—Epileptic Fits or Falling Sickness.—A certain method of cure has been discovered for this distressing complaint by a physician, who is desirous that all sufferers may benefit by this providential discovery; it is never known to fail, and will cure the most hopeless case after all other means have been tried. Full particulars will be sent by post to any person free of charge.—Address, Mr. Williams, 10, Oxford-terrace, Hyde-park, London.

TEETH, £1 TO £10 10s.—THE COMPLETE UPPER OR LOWER SET OF FOURTEEN PURE MINERAL TEETH, fitted and fixed to the mouth without pain. The extraction of stumps, loose or decayed teeth not being necessary in any case. This perfectly painless system of adapting artificial teeth to the mouth is protected by Her Majesty's Royal Letters Patent; and a written guarantee given with every case that they will not decay or change colour. 54, Rathbone-place, Oxford-street, near Tottenham-court-road. Mr. E. Toomey, Surgeon-Dentist.

RECKITT'S PARIS BLUE.—The marked superiority of this Laundry Blue over all others, and the quick appreciation of its merits by the public has been attended by the usual result—viz., a flood of imitations. The merit of the latter mainly consists in the ingenuity exerted, not simply in imitating the square shape, but making the general appearance of the wrappers resemble that of the genuine article. The manufacturers beg therefore to caution all buyers to see "Reckitt's Paris Blue" on each packet.

Advertisements.

EAST FINCHLEY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

Rev. S. W. McALL, M.A., MINISTER.

The MEMORIAL STONE of the NEW CHURCH will be LAID by SAMUEL MORLEY, Esq., M.P., on SATURDAY, May 12th, at 2.30 p.m., after which a *déjeûner* will be provided in the Lecture Hall, at which Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P., will preside. Revs. H. Allon D.D., Eustace R. Conder, M.A. (of Leeds), R. W. Dale, M.A. (of Birmingham), J. E. Vanner, Esq., E. B. Underhill, Esq., LL.D., S. D. Waddy, Esq., Q.C., M.P.; and C. E. Mudie, Esq., will take part in the proceedings of the day.

Tickets, 5s. each, may be had of D. C. Mackinnon, Esq., Hon. Secretary, Fortis-green, London, N.

A Special Train will leave North London Railway (Broad-street) at 2 p.m., calling at Dalston, Canonbury, and all intermediate stations, and arriving at East End, Finchley, in time for the ceremony.

BENNETT, 65 & 64, CHEAPSIDE.

WATCHES — BENNETT'S GOLD PRESENTATION WATCHES, FROM £10 TO £100.

CLOCKS — TO CLOCK PURCHASERS. JOHN BENNETT, having just completed great alterations in his Clock Show-Rooms, is enabled to offer to purchasers the most extensive Stock in London, comprising Clocks for the Drawing, Dining Rooms, and Presentation of the highest quality and newest designs at the lowest prices.

JOHN BENNETT, WATCH and CLOCK MANUFACTORY, 65 and 64, CHEAPSIDE.

PROPOSED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH and UNION SUNDAY-SCHOOL at BECKENHAM.

The liberal aid of Christian friends is earnestly solicited in promotion of this enterprise.

As stated in the Year Book, and in the Circular of the Local Committee, there is no hall or public room available for temporary work.

It is, therefore, urgently necessary to expedite the erection of the Sunday-school, which is also to be used as an introductory church.

CONTRIBUTIONS will be thankfully RECEIVED—in Beckenham, by T. J. Thomas, Esq., Tower House; H. Maltby, Esq., Clarence House; Rev. A. King, Dun Reigh; and at the London and Provincial Bank. In London, by Rev. J. C. Gallaway, A.M., Memorial Hall, Farringdon-street; Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, Paternoster-row; James Clarke, Esq., "Christian World," 13, Fleet-street; A. Benham, Esq., Financial Secretary, Sunday-school Union, 56, Old Bailey; Mr. W. R. Willcox, "Nonconformist" Office, 18, Bouverie-street; Messrs. Glyn, Mills, Currie, and Co., 67, Lombard-street (agents for the London and Provincial Bank).

Rev. A. King acts as Secretary to the Trustees and Local Committee, and will gladly communicate with friends.

Collecting Cards for the Sunday-school Building Fund, &c., and Framed Copies of the Architect's Drawing, to be put up in offices or warehouses, will be supplied to friends desiring to aid the object by receiving contributions.

NEW CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH and SCHOOLS, GEORGE STREET, CROYDON.

Rev. N. LINDON PARKYN, Minister.

The MEMORIAL STONE of the above building will be LAID by JAMES SPICER, Esq, of Woodford, on TUESDAY, 15th May, at One o'clock p.m., after which a Déjeuner will be provided in the Large Public Hall, at which James Spicer, Esq., will preside.

Revs. Thos. Aveling, D.D., Henry Batchelor, J. Guinness Rogers, B.A., W. M. Statham, G. S. Barrett, B.A. (of Norwich), and others will take part in the proceedings of the day.

Tickets for the Déjeuner, 4s. 6d. each (wines will be provided free of charge), may be obtained from Thos. A. Johns, Esq., 81, Gracechurch-street; E. Stewart, Esq., Mansion House-buildings, E.C.; M. C. Dukes, Esq., M.D., Wellesley-villas, Croydon; or of Arnold Pye-Smith, Elgin-road, Addiscombe.

At Seven o'clock in the Evening a Public Meeting will be held in the same place, at which J. Spencer Balfour, Esq., will preside, and the above Ministers and other Friends are expected to be present.

Tea will be provided at 5.30 p.m. Tickets, 1s. each, may be obtained at the doors.

Trains at frequent intervals from Cannon-street or London Bridge to East Croydon Station.

THE Reverend JOHN SPENCER PEARSALL deceased.—Pursuant to the Statute 22 and 23 Victoria cap. 35 intituled "An Act to Further Amend the Law of Property and to Relieve Trustees" NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all PERSONS having any CLAIMS or DEMANDS against or affecting the Estate of the Reverend John Spencer Pearsall late of Farncombe Villa Godalming in the County of Surrey Congregational Minister deceased (who died on the 22nd day of December 1876 and whose Will with one Codicil was proved on the 10th day of February 1877 in the Principal Registry of the Probate Division of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice by Samuel Small Mander of Glen Bank Tettenhall near Wolverhampton Esquire one of the Executors named in the said Will and Codicil) are REQUESTED to SEND in writing the PARTICULARS of their Debts Claims or Demands to the said Executor at the Office of his Solicitors Messrs West King Adams and Co of No 66 Cannon Street London on or before the 25th day of June next at the expiration of which time the said Executor will proceed to administer the Estate and distribute the assets of the said Testator among the parties entitled thereto having regard to the claims only of which the said Executor shall then have had notice and for the assets or any part thereof so administered or distributed the said Executor will not be liable to any person of whose debt claim or demand he shall not then have had notice And all persons indebted to the Estate of the said deceased are requested forthwith to pay the amount of their debts respectively to the said Executor

Dated this 30th day of April 1877

WEST KING ADAMS and CO.

66 Cannon Street London E.C. Solicitors for the said Executor

LYME HOUSE SCHOOL, EYTHORNE, DOVER (Established over fifty years).

Principal—Rev. T. DAVIES. Terms, 30 to 40 guineas per annum. This School, conducted on Christian principles aims, at giving a sound physical, mental, and moral education.

Reference to Ministers and others.

MAGNETINE.

DARLOW & CO.'S

PATENT FLEXIBLE

MAGNETIC APPLIANCES

Are unapproachable for comfort of wear, safety of use, and durability of magnetic power. They are used and recommended by gentlemen eminent in the medical profession, and persons of all classes of society have testified to their beneficial effects in cases of Gout and Rheumatism, Spinal, Liver, Kidney, Lung, Throat, and Chest Complaints, Epilepsy, Hysteria, General Debility, Indigestion, Hernia, Sciatica, Asthma, Neuralgia, Bronchitis, and other forms of Nervous and Rheumatic Affections.

MAGNETINE

Is unique as a perfectly flexible Magnet. It is an entirely original invention of Messrs. DARLOW & Co., improved by them on their previous invention patented in 1866, and possessing qualities which cannot be found in any other magnet. It is soft, light, and durable, elastic, flexible, and permanently magnetic.

TESTIMONIALS.

From GARTH WILKINSON, Esq., M.D., M.R.C.S.E.

DARLOW'S PATENT FLEXIBLE MAGNETIC APPLIANCES.

76, Wimpole-street, London, W., March, 1874.

F. W. Darlow, Esq.

SIR,—I am able to certify that I have used your Magnetine Appliances pretty largely in my practice, and that in personal convenience to my patients they are unexceptionable, and far superior to any other inventions of the kind which I have employed; and that of their efficacy, their positive powers, I have no doubt. I have found them useful in constipation, in abdominal congestion, in neuralgia, and in many cases involving weakness of the spine, and of the great organs of the abdomen. In the public interest I wish you to use my unqualified testimony in favour of your Magnetic Appliances.

I remain, yours faithfully,
GARTH WILKINSON,
M.D., M.R.C.S.E.

From the Rev. Dr. KERNAHAN, M.A., Ph.D., F.G.S &c.

St. Albans, March 28, 1876.

To Messrs. Darlow and Co.

GENTLEMEN,—I have pleasure in stating that I have derived much benefit from the use of your Magnetic Chest and Throat Protector, which I have been wearing since the close of the year 1874, having adopted it after a severe attack of quinsey, from which I have been ever since happily free. I am also glad to inform you that two ladies of my acquaintance, who had suffered much from bronchial irritation, have experienced much benefit from having a "Protector." I think it right to make you acquainted with these facts, and I give you liberty to use this note as you think proper.—Yours truly, JAMES KERNAHAN.

ADDITIONAL TESTIMONIAL FROM GARTH WILKINSON, ESQ., M.D., M.R.C.S.

76, Wimpole-street, Cavendish-square, W.,
F. W. Darlow, Esq. June 15, 1876.

SIR,—Since March, 1874, when I wrote to you to express my opinion, from experience, of the value of your Magnetic Appliances, I have been frequently asked by letter if my certificate was genuine, and if in the time since elapsed your inventions still approved themselves as beneficial in my practice. To both those questions I can answer by endorsing Magnetine as an arm which I am obliged to resort to in a good many cases.

In addition to the cases I before specified I can now add some experience of the utility of Magnetine in cases of debility, and as a local remedy in painful affections arising in the course of gout. Indeed, I am accustomed to prescribe it wherever topical weakness proceeds from a low vitality in the great nervous centres, or in the principal organs of assimilation, nutrition, and blood purification; also in weak throats from nervous exhaustion affecting the larynx.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

GARTH WILKINSON, M.D., M.R.C.S.E.

From the Rev. HENRY BUDD.

DARLOW'S PATENT MAGNETINE CURATIVE APPLIANCES.

Wesleyan Parsonage, Greymouth, New Zealand, July 22, 1876.

To Messrs. Darlow & Co.

GENTLEMEN,—It is now about four months since I began to use your Magnetine Throat Band, and I have found great benefit from the use of it. The benefit was immediate, and has continued. The night huskiness, the result of a bronchial attack, has now altogether disappeared.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
HENRY BUDD.

MAGNETINE.

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VICE-MASTER—

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JOHN M. LIGHTWOOD, Esq., B.A. (Lond. and Camb.), Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge; First Class in Mathematics at the University of London.

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A. ERLEBACH, Esq., B.A. Lond.

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LADY RESIDENT—Miss COOKE.

The SUMMER TERM commences THURSDAY, May 3rd, 1877.

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS

AT THE ORDINARY MEETING OF PROPRIETORS, HELD ON WEDNESDAY, THE 2nd DAY OF MAY, 1877.

The Directors have again the pleasure of reporting a material advance in the amount of new business effected by the Company during the past year.

The policies issued were 474 in number, assuring £249,060, or nearly £50,000 in excess of the preceding year. The average amount of each policy was £525, and the new premium income represented by these policies was £8,295 3s. 10d., or £2,100 more than in 1875. The increase on the Total Revenue from Premiums and Interest was £4,995.

The sum paid for Claims by death, during the year, was not in excess of the amount anticipated; but the aggregate sum disbursed on account of policies falling due exceeded that of any former statement, owing to an increased number of Endowment Assurances having arrived at maturity. Nevertheless, £23,000 were added to the Funds of the Company.

Although a considerable extension has been made in the Agencies of the Company, especially in Ireland, by the opening of a Branch Office in Dublin, the expenses have been but slightly augmented; the Directors trust these additional connections will have a beneficial effect on the business of the Company.

The Members of the Board who this year retire by rotation are JOHN GARDINER, Esq., and Sir J. EARDLEY WILMOT, Bart., who with the Auditors, Messrs. EVORS, J. E. SMITH, F. G. PRIDEAUX, and E. BOOKER, offer themselves for re-election. The Report on the transactions of the year is appended.

The Directors again recommend the payment of a dividend equal to 5½ per cent. on the original paid-up capital of the Company for the year ending 31st December last, six months' Interest at that rate having been already paid.

J. R. CARMICHAEL, Chairman.

AUDITOR'S REPORT. (AFFIXED TO THE ACCOUNTS.)

We, the undersigned, having examined the Accounts and inspected the securities of the Sovereign Life Assurance Company, certify that the foregoing statements respectively are correct summaries of the transactions of the past year and of the position of the Company as shown by its books of account on the 31st December, 1876.

ALEX. EVORS,
J. E. SMITH,
F. G. PRIDEAUX,
EUSTACE BOOKER,
} *Auditors.*

7th May, 1877.

NOTE—The General Annuity Fund Accounts are audited by Gentlemen elected by the members of the Fund.

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AND
INVESTMENT COMPANY
(LIMITED),

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Mr. W. H. Basden, 92, Cannon-street, E.C.

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2. Applications are now being received for the third issue, at £2 per share premium.
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4. After making a full allowance for all rates, repairs, loss of rent, and diminution of term in case of leaseholds, the income from the estates already purchased is expected to amount to nearly 8 per cent., besides profit on re-sales.
5. Shareholders, in addition to 5 per cent. interest, will participate in the periodical bonuses, which, it is expected, will be declared by the Company from time to time.
6. Owners of eligible house property wishing to sell at a moderate price should send the particulars to the Secretary.
7. As the estates purchased will yield a good profit revenue it has been considered necessary, in order to protect the interests of existing shareholders, that the third issue shall be offered to the public at £2 per share premium.

For full information apply to
W. H. BASDEN, Secretary,

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To G. H. Jones, Esq.

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RELATIONS OF THE CIVIL AND SPIRITUAL POWERS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF EUROPE.

This is the general heading of the inaugural address delivered by Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., the new chairman of the Congregational Union, at the annual session, held yesterday at Westminster Chapel. The speaker said that, like some of his predecessors, he had found a difficulty in selecting a suitable subject. But the relations of the civil and spiritual powers was, as it were, in the air, and as that topic, in its bearing on home affairs, had been recently dealt with in a masterly and exhaustive manner by two members of that Union, he asked them to cast their eyes over other countries that they might get a just conception of the might and magnitude of that great conflict, which was agitating all nations, perplexing all governments, and threatening in some countries to give rise to disastrous civil strife, if indeed it might not beget a recurrence of those religious wars which they had fondly hoped had for ever passed away from the possibilities of future European history. The charge against Englishmen that they are a little insular in their sentiments, as well as in geographical position, was not perhaps without some foundation. Thus some of their worthy friends of the Church of England would fain persuade themselves that the agitation which troubled their own peace is only a kind of tempest in a tea-cup, stirred up by "fierce and acrimonious political Dissenters," moved principally by envy at the present happy condition of the Established Church. They did not seem to be aware that there was a great tidal wave of opinion sweeping over the face of the world, and rushing strongly against civil establishments of religion, as the only means of escape to nations from terrible evils. He thought it might give enlargement and elevation to the aims of those who were engaged in that movement to feel that if they succeeded in finding a solution for this great problem, which should ultimately redound to the advantage of both Church and State, we should be giving help and hope to millions of their fellow-men and fellow-Christians who were elsewhere battling with the same difficulty. Mr. Richard went on to say:—

> There are three relations on which it is possible that Church and State can co-exist in the same country—either that the Church should rule the State, or that the State should rule the Church, or that Church and State, recognising and acknowledging that they exercise dominion over different provinces, should, on perfectly friendly terms, agree to separate and to keep apart, each keeping within its own domain and minding its own business? No doubt there are points where the two jurisdictions meet and intersect each other, and may come into conflict. But when each of the two powers relinquishes the pretension of interfering in what is obviously and admittedly the sphere of the other, no insurmountable difficulty has been found, as is abundantly illustrated by the experience of the United States and the British Colonies, in adjusting those points so as to avoid all breach of social and political harmony.

He had always thought that the words used by Gallio, though his motive was not very worthy or exalted, when the Jews dragged Paul before him, laid down the sound principle for the guidance of a magistrate. In their continental survey they would find that the difficulty arose from the attempt to maintain some sort of union, alliance, or concordat between Church and State, which led to a fierce, internecine, never-ending scramble for the supremacy. Of course they must recognise the fact that the exorbitant pretensions of the Papacy, as formulated so audaciously in the Encyclical, the Syllabus, and the Vatican decrees, immensely aggravated and complicated the problem in all Catholic countries; and indeed more or less in all countries where there was an Established Church. But for that also there seemed no possible remedy but in the absolute severance of the two powers, with this distinct reservation, however, that when the line of demarcation was drawn the State must take care that the education of the people was within its own domain.

Turning to their nearest neighbour, France, it appeared that the present relations of Church and State there were founded on the Concordat made between Napoleon I. and Pope Pius VII. in 1801. In the wild tumult of the Revolution, the Church, whose enormous corruptions had contributed largely to bring about that fierce political cyclone, was for a time swept clean away. Divine service was forbidden, the churches were closed, the worship of the *Etre Supreme* was decreed by authority, and the priests were exposed to the most atrocious and pitiless persecutions. But this also was done in pursuance of the principle that the State has a right to regulate all matters of religion. The Free-thinkers whose writings had prepared the Revolution, like their brethren Hobbes and Bolingbroke in England, and their successors Strauss and his followers in modern Germany, were no friends of religious liberty. They asserted, as broadly as Bossuet had done, the right of the sovereign authority to prescribe to men what they should believe, and to punish them for disbelief. This was proved by quotations from Rousseau's "Contrat Social," and it was by virtue of the same claim of the civil magistrate to enforce his will in religious matters, that the Roman Catholic priests were banished to Cayenne, or sent out in hulks to perish at sea, for refusing to conform to the worship of the *Etre Supreme* under the Convention which, under Louis XIV., drove hundreds of thousands of Protestants from France, or condemned those who remained to death, for not conforming to the Roman Catholic religion. When Napoleon was established in supreme power, there was a great opportunity to give religious liberty to France on sure and firm foundations. Lafayette advised him to follow out in its integrity the principle carried out in America But Napoleon was not a man to give *liberty* to anybody or anything. His answer was, "The Catholic religion dominates France; besides, I have need of the Pope, and he shall do what I will." The whole history of this Concordat was a bitter burlesque on the prophetic ideal, so great a favourite with some defenders of establishments, of kings being nursing-fathers to the Church. Napoleon had no religion, and pretended to have none. For although, when it served his purpose, he could administer nauseous flatteries to the clergy, he never scrupled to make the most cynical avowal of his utter contempt for Christianity, save as an instrument in the hands of the priests to subserve his own despotic rule. As it had been truly and wittily said, Napoleon found in the Gospel only two commandments—obey the Emperor, and accomplish your military service; this is the law and the prophets. The Pope at length, by threats or coaxing, was induced to accept the Concordat, which made the Romish Church and its priests the abject tools of the State. Besides this, Napoleon himself issued a series of organic articles which brought the Church more completely into subjection to the civil power, and among other things forbade any nuncio to exercise any functions, any bull or mandate to be issued, or any synod to be held, without the authorisation of the Government, and prescribed in the minutest details everything connected with the organisation and administration of the Church. Though the Pope in an Allocution pronounced in 1802 disapproved of these Articles, he did not dare to proclaim them invalid, nor did they prevent the French clergy from joining in a chorus of fulsome adulation of Napoleon, and making themselves the most servile instruments of his will. Napoleon was proclaimed as the restorer of religion, the servant of God, the new Cyrus, the new Constantine, the new Charlemagne. When the war broke forth against England, the pulpits resounded with fierce denunciations of *la perfide Albion;* it was compared to Tyre and Sidon, and the maledictions of the prophets were poured upon it in inexhaustible abundance. The bulletins of the Grand Army were read from the pulpit as sermons. When the country began to revolt against the successive levies of conscripts by which the Emperor was depopulating the nation to carry on his wars of aggression and conquest, he demanded of the bishops to aid the prefects in bringing the refractory to obedience; and the priests often supplemented the police in this sad office. Such was the bitter bread of humiliation which those had to eat who, for the sake of gaining worldly advantage for their Church, were content to become the instruments of a despot's will.

No doubt the Roman Catholic Church had been restored by Napoleon to much of its former outward splendour. It was surrounded with all the pomp and paraphernalia of official distinction. To use Burke's magnificent phrase, it was again lifting up its mitred front in courts and parliaments. But at what a cost? Better than this the Church in the desert; better the Pilgrim Fathers landing on the naked Plymouth rock without succour or hope save the sublime consciousness that they were holding fast their fidelity to their great Master in heaven; better the Scotch Covenanters, seeking refuge among the fastnesses of their native hills from the swords of Claverhouse's dragoons; yes, better to wander about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, than to be clothed in purple and linen, and to fare sumptuously every day, on condition of prostituting the religion of the meek and lowly into an accomplice of the most degrading and disastrous despotism that ever cursed the earth.

By this means Napoleon did more than any other man to prepare for the Ultramontane movement that has since made such progress in France.

He was determined, in the first place, to make a clean sweep of the old bishops, as being, in his apprehension, too favourable to the ancient royal *régime* which he wanted to supersede. He insisted, therefore, that the Pope should order them to resign, and if they refused, to declare their sees vacant, and confer canonical institution upon bishops appointed by himself. The Pope struggled against this for a long time, until the more astute of his counsellors, seeing the immense significance of the principle involved in the demand, said to him: "Let us conclude the Concordat which he desires; when it is satisfied its incalculable religious importance will be recognised, for it gives to Rome the power over the episcopate throughout the world." But there was another provision introduced into the Concordat. It was thought that a considerable number of the lower clergy cherished patriotic and Liberal sympathies. As a check upon them a power of dismissal was given to the bishops, and thus 20,000 incumbents were made to hold their office really at the pleasure of their bishops, and were placed virtually in a position of dependence upon them. By this arrangement a deadly blow was directed against the ancient liberties of the Gallican Church. The bishops hold their jurisdiction from the Pope, and the clergy are in the power of the bishops, and thus the Church is bound by a chain, the last link of which is fastened to the Papist throne.

Thus the clergy became more and more Ultramontane, and all other considerations were subordinated to the maintenance of the Papal supremacy. A flagrant illustration of this was to be found when, immediately after the tremendous conflict between France and Germany, the French bishops organised a vast system of petitioning in favour of the restoration of the temporal power of the Pope, which meant avowed hostility with Italy, even while French soil was yet in foreign occupation. The same course is still being pursued by the clergy of France:—

> Stimulated by the last Papal allocution, they have been promoting a violent agitation throughout France with a view to compel the Government to interpose for the restoration of the Pope to his temporal sovereignty. A short time ago, the Bishop of Nevers addressed a letter direct to the mayors of the Nièvre, in which he says: "The Pope being no longer free in Rome, the result is that we ourselves are no longer free in our consciences, and we consequently ought to use all our influence to obtain a change in such an abnormal state of things, and the restoration to the sovereign of our souls the independence which he absolutely requires in order to guide us. We must first instil these views in the minds of the population whose interests are confided to us. We must then concert together to cause similar convictions to prevail in the various councils of the country." It is to be hoped that the vigorous resolution passed on Thursday last in the Legislature Chamber, under the inspiration of M. Gambetta's powerful eloquence, will effectually extinguish this audacious and dangerous agitation.

He need not dwell upon the present state of the established Protestant Church in France, so full of mournful significance and instruction, as it had lately been fully expounded by M. de Pressensé. Still he thought there was hope for that country. The cause of the spiritual independence of the Church has been, and is, pleaded on the highest grounds and with consummate ability by a number of men, whose writings cannot fail to exercise a large influence over their countrymen—such as Vinet, Laboulaye, and Pressensé. And M. Laboulaye told him a few years ago that he had never known any question grow so rapidly in France as that of the separation of Church and State.

Mr. Richard then turned to Germany, where, up to 1870, the relations between the State and the Roman Catholic Church were complacent, if not cordial. The zealous friends of the former were disposed to cherish sanguine expectations that Prince Bismarck, when the French war had been concluded, would make himself the champion of the restoration of the temporal power of the Pope. It was not unlikely that that astute and unscrupulous statesman had for a while played with their hopes in this respect. But by that time the Œcumenical Council had proclaimed the Infallibility of the Pope, and it is probable that the great German statesman foresaw that that Church would

ere long attack the Government as representing the national interests. The language used by him in addressing the House of Peers in 1872 showed that he was impelled to his legislative crusade against that church by political apprehension, for he then spoke of the manifest intention to paralyse German unity by religious complications. Prince Bismarck entered upon the conflict with characteristic boldness, and got the famous Falk Laws passed :—

Some of them we cannot hesitate to approve and applaud from our point of view, as friends of religious liberty; the law on civil marriages, for instance; the law of secession which allows converts to change their religion without incurring civil penalties; the law which takes education from the control of the clergy, by making all educational institutions subject to inspection of authorities appointed by the State, together with such provisions as protect a citizen from suffering detriment in property, person, or reputation from acts of ecclesiastical censure or discipline. But some of them are of much more questionable character, and it behoves us as Protestant Dissenters to be jealously on our guard against giving the sanction of our approval to acts which violate the principles of religious liberty, because they are directed against our theological and ecclesiastical adversaries, or even against those who do not scruple to become persecutors when they have the opportunity.

Different views of these enactments had been taken by friends equally attached to liberty of conscience. While Mr. Paton in his admirable paper in the *Fortnightly Review* furnished a very plausible justification of them as measures of compromise and transition in the present peculiar condition of the German Empire; M. de Pressensé, in a singularly powerful article which appeared in the *Revue de Deux Mondes*, strongly condemned them, and contended that the persecution which struck a religious adversary struck that which was our common possession, and our sole guarantee in the conflict of ideas and beliefs—was liberty of conscience. He (Mr. Richard) thought that Prince Bismarck, a man of "blood and iron," had committed the error of not taking account of the great spiritual forces that were at work in society, and which could not be controlled by such carnal weapons as Krupp's cannon, for they were "as the air invulnerable." The Falk Laws had been applied with remorseless severity :—

In one month—that of March, 1874—there were eighty or ninety convictions under the Ecclesiastical Laws—five of them bishops, sentenced to fine and imprisonment. In the diocese of Posen alone, there were in that month thirty-nine priests sent to prison. But there are no signs of yielding. These laws have been defended on the ground that they were in fact passed in the interests of the lay members and inferior clergy of the Roman Catholic Church itself. But the laity and clergy won't have them, but are as resolute in their resistance as the bishops themselves. The Chapters refuse to elect bishops in place of those deposed by the State. By a law of April, 1875, it was enacted that all State grants to the Episcopate, the institutions connected with the bishoprics, and the clergy of the archbishoprics of Cologne, Gnesen, and Posen; of the bishoprics of Kulm, Ermeland, Breslau, Hildesheim, Osnaburck, Paderborn, Münster, Treves, Fulda; of the delegates, districts of those dioceses, as well as of the Prussian parts of the archbishoprics of Prague, Olmutz, Freiburg, and of the diocese of Mayence, will cease from the day of the publication of this law. What was the result? The subvention of the State was about a million of thalers a year; this gap was immediately filled by voluntary contributions, and the law missed its object. And here, perhaps, there is a gleam of light as to the ultimate solution of this perplexing problem. Already in 1873, M. Windhorst, the eloquent leader of the Clerical party in the German Chamber, declared that in preference to this crafty legislation, which kills the Church, not by the sword, but by slow poison, he did not hesitate to declare that he and his friends demanded the free American *regime*. And if the State goes on gradually disestablishing and disendowing the Church after the manner of the law of 1875, which I have cited, and the faithful come forward to supply the funds by voluntary contributions, who can tell but we may live to see a free Roman Catholic Church in the midst of the Evangelical Empire?

Meanwhile, the condition of the Protestant Church in Germany was utterly deplorable. It had come to be regarded so much as a mere piece of State mechanism, that it had lost all power and vitality as a Christian institution. The spread of rationalistic or latitudinarian views among the more educated classes was bad enough, but still worse was the complete divorce between the Church and the great body of the people—

The author of a work entitled "Religious Thought in Germany," which consists in great part of letters which appeared in the *Times* from their Berlin correspondent, himself a German and a Prussian, describes the state of things thus :—"The vast majority of the Protestant middle classes, and even a large portion of the lower strata of society, are estranged from the religion of their ancestors, and take no interest in the Church or the religious lessons thrust upon the schools by Church and Government combined." They never go to church. Out of a Protestant population in Dresden of over 150,000, only six or seven thousand attend public worship on the Lord's Day. Why is this? One reason, and probably the main reason is, that the State has taken religion entirely out of the hands of the people into its own. They are drilled into religious observance as they are drilled into military discipline. The ministers are to them mere Government officials, paid to do a certain work at a prescribed rate. "The Protestant clergy," says an American minister, who had long lived in Germany, "instead of being looked upon with respect by the people, as in England and America, are here resented with contempt as a sort of spiritual policemen or religious scavengers. They do no pastoral visiting, and, unless eloquent in the pulpit, have no influence in the community. They are upheld simply by the power of the State."

Such were the fruits of the State Church and the State school in Germany. What was the remedy? It was hard to say.

A clergyman of the Church of England, who has resided for several years in that country, says:—"Germany suffers much from the want of free Dissenting Churches alongside of the State Church." He adds, that "inasmuch as the relation in which the Church stands to the State has been a hindrance in the great Fatherland to free Evangelical action, a feeling in favour of the separation of Church and State has sprung up even in Evangelical circles. There is also a growing feeling among the Liberal party in favour of disestablishment; and I believe, that so far from such a course endangering the real interests of the Church in Germany, it would lead to an outburst of evangelical zeal, which would surprise many who look upon Germany as a land of infidels, which it decidedly is not."

Austria not many years ago stood next to Spain in its absolute subjection to Rome, and the Concordat of 1854 placed the most precious rights of the nation absolutely at the feet of the Papacy, giving the Pope the right of publishing what he pleased, and handing over to the Church all education, &c. It was in fact a translation into diplomatic language of the Encyclical of Pius IX. But all was changed after the crushing defeat of Sadowa, when the Austrian nation shook itself free from pseudo-clerical domination, the signal for this revolt being given by the teachers in the national schools. Responsible government was established under the ministry of Count von Beust. Then came anti-Romanist legislation :—

Matrimonial causes were taken away from the ecclesiastical judges and submitted to the civil courts. Civil marriage was recognised as valid. The law of mixed marriages was so far changed, that the sons were to follow the religion of the father and the daughters that of the mother. Conversions from one religion to another were declared free. The cemeteries were no longer to be closed to Dissenters. Abstinence from labour on week days which were festivals of the Church was no longer obligatory. But the most important change was in the education laws. The schools were placed in the hands of the laity, the religious instruction, which was not compulsory, was left to the care of the churches or religious societies to which the children or their parents belong.

The bishops and clergy were in arms, but that did not avail. In 1870 the Concordat was abolished, and a new series of laws was passed, regulating first, the appointment to ecclesiastical offices, over which the State retains a veto, requiring the submission of episcopal mandates to the Government; placing ecclesiastical properties and foundations under the supervision of civil authority; and deciding the conditions on which other religious communities may exist.

Mr. Richard then turned to the ecclesiastical conflict in Italy, where, in 1870, when Rome was occupied as the new capital of the new kingdom, the Legislature promulgated a series of laws known as the Laws of Guarantee, conferring upon the Pontiff and the Church rights and privileges which seem at first sight to be of extravagant generosity. They were meant, no doubt, to conciliate the Pope and the Curia. But so far as that was concerned it was labour lost. Some of the laws affecting the general relations of Church and State were as follows :—

The Pope is allowed to correspond freely with the Episcopate and the whole Catholic Church without obstruction from the Government. No cardinal or other ecclesiastic shall be responsible for any ecclesiastical act performed in Rome having reference to the functions of the Holy See. The civil power does not interfere with the full exercise by the Pope of his authority and spiritual jurisdiction and disciplinary powers, and consequently every appeal to the temporal power in matters ecclesiastical is abolished. The Government renounces the right of nomination or presentation in the grant of the major Church appointments throughout the kingdom. The royal *exequatur* and *placet*, and every form of Government assent to the publication and execution of the acts of ecclesiastical authority, are abolished. The bishops are not required to take the oath of allegiance to the King. Some think these concessions were far too liberal. Mr. Gladstone especially very strongly objects to the absolute surrender of the right of episcopal nomination and appointment to the Pope. He says that up to the passing of these laws the civil power in all the States of Italy now included in the new kingdom enjoyed either the right to nominate the bishops for the Pope's approval, or the right to refuse and exclude them by withdrawing the *ex quatur*. Mr. Gladstone, regarding the State as trustee of the rights of the laity and the lower clergy as against the hierarchy, thinks this abandonment of the power of nomination and appointment as a grave though unintentional breach of trust.

But the Italian Government had not abandoned, so completely as might appear, its control over ecclesiastical action, for while giving what appeared to be unbounded liberty to the Church within the spiritual sphere, it imposed the strictest restraint upon it in the civil sphere; taking the power, for instance, of refusing a bishop the revenues of his see if he declined to ask the approval of the State. The system did not, however, work satisfactorily, because the Government shrank from carrying out its own laws. Thus since the law of guarantees was promulgated fifty-six bishops have been allowed to enter on the government of their dioceses without any but a Papal title, and without taking the smallest notice either of State, clergy, or people; and they have been further allowed to nominate parish priests, to whom the Government has given its *placet*, and who have taken possession of the benefices in large numbers. This created much complaint, the Minghetti Ministry was defeated on the question, and its successors obtained an overwhelming majority in the new Chambers, and were pledged to deal with clerical aggression.

Immediately on his accession to office, Signor Mancini, the present Minister of Grace and Justice, insisted upon the stringent application of the law, which required the royal *exequatur* before the bishop designate could enter on the possession of the temporalities of his see. This firmness had its effect. The Pope, after having consulted the Congregation which regulates the nomination of the bishops, has permitted them to apply to the Government and to present their *bulls*. In his last violent Allocution he grumbles dreadfully over this. But he has submitted, and as it is his first act of submission it is not without considerable significance. But this is not all. The new Government introduced another Bill, which is called the Clerical Abuses Bill. It provides that any clergyman who shall so abuse his office as to disturb the public conscience or the peace of families, shall be liable to imprisonment, varying from four months to two years, and to pay a fine of a thousand francs. It provides further that any clergyman who in the exercise of his public ministry shall censure or outrage the institutions and laws of the country, shall be liable to three months' imprisonment and a fine of a thousand francs. Moreover, if religious teachers incite the people to disobey the laws, or if they impede them in the exercise of their civil and political rights, they may be imprisoned or fined in a similar manner. And perhaps the sting of the law is this, as it evidently glances at the Pope himself, that those priests are liable to punishment who publish or diffuse writings having the same tendency, *from whatever ecclesiastical authority or from whatever place they may proceed.*

Such provisions may appear to us rather dangerous, but it may be assumed that the men who are at the helm of affairs now in Italy, are men not likely needlessly or wantonly to cramp freedom of speech or printing. No better evidence of this can be desired than the fact that they have refused to interfere with the free circulation through the country of that bitter and intemperate Allocution of the Pope recently issued, in which he distinctly appeals to the Roman Catholic priesthood throughout Europe and the world to rouse up their flocks to act on their respective Governments with a view to overturn the Italian Constitution, and to compel the Italian Government to reinstate him in the possession of his temporal dominion. A Government which tolerates this could not be an intolerant Government. Looking at the peculiar position of Italy, they could not judge of the necessity of such laws from an English point of view. He had received from Signor Pierantoni, who took an active part in framing them, ample materials out of which might be constructed a satisfactory justification of the Government and Parliament of Italy for introducing and passing these laws. It was not, however, possible within the compass of that address to present even a summary of the statements and arguments by which they defend their own course. What added to the complication in Italy was this :—

On the one hand foreign nations, or at least Germany, are beginning to ask, rather ominously, how far the Italian Government must be held responsible for the protection of a power which, like the Pope and the Roman Curia, is doing its utmost to stir up sedition in other countries. On the other hand that old man, standing on the verge of the grave, is using all his influence, by appeals to the Roman Catholic clergy, and by autographic letters to Roman Catholic princes, to bring all Catholic countries into hostility with Italy, for he seems to think it a small thing to wrap all Europe in the flames of a fierce religious war, if he may thereby be restored to the possession of his phantom temporal power in Rome.

There were, however, gleams of light from the action of the people themselves in Italy :—

About two years ago an event of great significance took place in one of the rural communes in Mantua. The archbishop of that province is a violent Ultramontane, and the priest, Don Leonardi, who was administering to the parishioners as a *locum tenens* until a regular incumbent should be appointed, not being to his mind, he removed him, and appointed another who shared his own views. The parishioners, resenting this intrusion, held a meeting, which was called with great formality, and by a vote of 207 to 47 elected Don Leonardi to be their priest. The archbishop visited this contumacy by a thundering decree of excommunication, to which, however, the peasant parishioners turned a deaf ear. He promoted a suit in the civil court, demanding that Don Leonardi should be interdicted from exercising his functions as parish priest, and that he should be ejected from the church and the parsonage. But the civil court of Mantua declined to grant either of these demands, and in going so, it laid down a principle of the gravest importance, which is, that the ownership of the parish church belongs, not to the Catholic Church as a whole, nor the bishops, but to the civil communities, and its administration to the syndic and other local civic authorities until the vacant incumbency has been filled up. It leaves Don Leonardi undisturbed in the possession of the church. But according to the judgment it pronounced in reference to a neighbouring parish which came before it under similar circumstances, while giving the church it refused to give the benefice to the priest elected by the parishioners. May we not here see the germ of a sort of Congregational Roman Catholic Church, the priest elected by the people and supported by their voluntary contributions? Mr. Gallenga (and few men know Italy better), in his work recently published called "Italy Revisited," attaches great importance to this movement. "Already," he says, "the old Duchy of Mantua begins to exhibit the phenomenon of a bishop without a diocese, and a diocese without a bishop; and what may not be the effect of so easy and so signal a victory of the people over a prelate in a country like Italy, where not only the mass of the laity but many thousands of the lower clergy are fretting against Papal and prelatic tyranny, and aspiring to a more liberal and equitable government of the Church?" Indeed there

seems to be an attempt going on at this moment to form a powerful association, under the title of the "Society for the Revindication of the Rights of the Christian People," for the purpose of demanding "the restoration to the clergy and people of the right of electing their pastors of whatever rank in the hierarchy." To what extent this association has found favour in Italy, I have no means of ascertaining. But there are two facts which already indicate that it is regarded as representing a movement of considerable importance. One is that the late Government, through the mouth of its Minister of Police and Justice, expressed its sympathy with the views and aims on which it is founded. M. Vigliani told those who addressed him as representatives of the society, very much as Mr. Gladstone told Mr. Miall, that their duty was "to mature public opinion, which must sooner or later produce its influence upon the deliberations of Parliament." The other fact which testifies to the importance of this association is this, that it has received the honour of special denunciation from the Papal authority, which has pronounced the major excommunication against all persons who are either members, promoters, adherents, or favourers of the society.

The state of things in Switzerland is peculiar. Here all religious bodies are in a state of servile subjection to the State:—

Refusing to accept the simple principle of the total separation of the two, the Liberals of that country are determined to *have* an Established Church, but under conditions which render impossible the maintenance of any system either of doctrine or discipline. In several of the cantons they have constituted what they call a democratic Church—that is, a Church absolutely dependent upon the suffrage of the citizens. Every citizen, Protestant or Catholic, registered as a taxpayer, is by right an elector for his Church, without any religious condition being exacted of him. Whether he be a Christian or a freethinker, a devout man or an atheist, his right as a member of the Church is entire and inviolable. This constituency elects the minister and all the Church officers, so that they may send in the widest varieties of doctrinal teaching, and the bond of a common faith is utterly broken. And, to aggravate the folly and mischief, the priest and pastor are subject to re-election every six years. All creeds and liturgies are abolished. No Church discipline is possible, for the law forbids that any citizen should be subject to any punishment, even expulsion from the Church, on account of his religious or irreligious opinions. In other words, as Mr. Geffcken expresses it, the main object was to compel religious communities to recognise those of their members who have practically renounced their communion. The consequence is, that both Catholics and Protestants have rebelled against this legislation. It is difficult to find priests who will submit to be so elected; and among serious Evangelical Protestants there has been a considerable secession, who have founded voluntary churches of their own.

A peculiar state of things obtains in Belgium. There the clergy, who then appeared to be very liberal, obtained great concessions in 1830. Now, their Church is absolutely independent of the State, while the State provides endowments and extensive privileges for the Church. "The relations of the Church and State here," says a distinguished Belgian, in a private letter to Mr. Richard, "are officially very simple; the State pays the bishops nominated by Rome and the priests nominated by the bishops." Among the concessions made to the Catholic party at the time referred to, the most fatal was this—that the education of the people was virtually surrendered into their hands. The national schools are under the absolute control of the clergy.

For a time, while the Catholic clergy remained what they professed to be in 1830—liberal in their views—no serious harm was done. But when the great wave of Ultramontanism began to flow over Europe, in no land did it set in so strongly as in Belgium; and then the priests turned to the utmost account the vantage-ground they had acquired by the Constitution of 1830. Education is unscrupulously used as an instrument for the promulgation of the doctrines of the Syllabus. Every considerable town has a newspaper under the direction of the bishops. At the time of elections, and notably at the last election, the clergy from the pulpit denounced the Liberals as men void of morality and honour, who are aiming to destroy religion. The priests lead the peasantry to the poll like sheep, and voters who are known to support Liberal candidates are ruined in their worldly prospects.

There is reason to believe that this extravagance of clerical tyranny will result in the decided growth of Protestant feeling. M. de Lavelaye, for instance, the distinguished author whose writings are known all over Europe, has himself seceded from the Romish Church, and says in a recent letter to Mr. Richard that in a short time a considerable number of persons at Brussels, almost all writers and professors, will make their adhesion to Protestantism. In the country districts there are also some signs of a popular movement in the same direction, as in the province of Brabant.

The moral suggested by this brief survey of the ecclesiastical state of Europe was obvious—"Let no man join together what God hath put asunder."

Christianity was intended by its Divine founder to be a subtle spiritual force—"My words, they are spirit and they are life"—with a diffusing and penetrating power by which it could enter into and permeate human society, acting upon and assimilating it to its own nature, until it had leavened the whole lump. "Christianity," says M. Tocqueville, "can exist under every government. This is an evidence of its truth. It never has been bound, and never will be bound, to any *form* of government or to the grandeur of any single nation. It can reign in the worst governments, and extract from the calamities which they inflict the occasion for admirable virtues." Yes, but that is only on condition that it does not become itself the slave and vassal of any Government. But men, not satisfied to let it work thus as an independent spiritual influence, have sought to imprison it in gross material forms and institutions, and to place it under the protection of that brute force, the worship of which is still the religion of so many men and so many Christians, so that its Divine power is neutralised by coarse admixture with the beggarly elements of this world. And what is the result of this perverse resolve to counteract the Divine intention? Look around on all the countries of Europe and see the answer. What are the present results of the attempt to combine the temporal and spiritual power in close relations with each other? These are some of the results. It involves the Governments themselves in ceaseless trouble and embarrassment. It rends asunder the national unity in every country where it prevails. It caricatures Christianity before the face of the world, and drives men in shoals into irreligion and infidelity. It degrades and dishonours the Church itself by making it a mere organ for sordid personal or corporate ambition.

What is it but burning ecclesiastical questions, questions arising from the conflict between Church and State, that disturb the peace and confound the policy of the foremost statesmen of France, Germany, Italy, and Belgium at this moment? This result, indeed, we should hardly deplore if we could only hope that the mass of perplexity in which they are involved, and from which they struggle in vain to escape, should force upon the crowned and epauletted theologians of Europe the tardy conviction, that in dealing with spiritual things they are dealing with things beyond their province and beyond their competency.

But a far graver effect of the system of State-Churchism was the way in which it converted religion into an element of discord, distracting and dividing the members of the same social and political community, and almost, in some cases, menacing civil war. Contrast this state of things with the ecclesiastical condition of the United States, where Church and State are separated:—

In no country in the world is there more religious earnestness and activity. In no country in the world are there more, or so many, religious sects. In no country in the world does political passion and partisanship run to greater height. And yet we never hear there of the conflicting pretensions of rival sects coming in to exasperate political animosity by theological and ecclesiastical rancour. We never hear of questions pertaining to the doctrine and discipline, the offices and ritual of a Christian Church being flung down on the floor of Congress as they are on the floor of the British Parliament, to be discussed and decided by an assembly consisting of men of all religions and of no religion; Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics. "Religious equality in the United States," says Mr. Goldwin Smith, "may not be perfect unity, it may not be the height of culture or of grace, but at all events it is peace. . . . . Saving in the case of Roman Catholicism, we cannot call to mind a single instance of a serious appeal in an election to sectarian feeling. Much as we have heard of the two candidates for the presidency, we could not at this moment tell to what Church either of them belongs. Where no Church is privileged there can be no cause for jealousy. The churches dwell side by side without disturbing the State with any quarrels; they are all alike loyal to the Government. . . . So far as we know, controversy between them is very rare; there is more of it within the several churches between their own more orthodox and more liberal members. In none does it rage more violently than in the Episcopal Church, though under religious equality irreconcilable disagreement on religious questions leads to secession, not to mutual law-suits and imprisonments."

But worse than all was this, that the sinister alliance between Church and State had so utterly misrepresented the whole spirit and tendency of Christianity as to alienate from it a large proportion of the best elements of European society.

I know not a sadder fact than this—for I am afraid that an indisputable fact it is—that the great bulk of the Liberal party, of the friends of political progress on the Continent, are sceptics if not unbelievers. Dr. Geffcken, in his able work on Church and State, says in reference to the conflict going on in Germany, "that as the result of it all the elements hostile to any Church have been fortified. Most of what the Liberal press says against the Catholic Church might as well be said against the Christian faith in general," and that "the masses are becoming either irreligious or Ultramontane." Mr. Laveleye says that "France is above all things in want of men who, without breaking with tradition, are willing to accept new ideas. The Republicans are generally hostile or indifferent to all religious ideas." He bewails the same thing in reference to his own country, and is earnestly endeavouring to convince those who with himself are striving to maintain Liberal institutions in Belgium against the invasions of Roman absolutism, that they cannot combat this power by mere negations in religion; that the only effectual way of attacking the Church of Rome is "by showing that she has wandered from the doctrines of Christ, and by preaching a purer and more severe Christianity than hers." The same, I fear, in Italy. I was greatly struck by a remark made by a most intelligent Italian at Milan. I was expressing, and with all sincerity, my delight at the indications I saw of national regeneration in Italy, by their intellectual, educational, and commercial activity. "Yes," he said, "but there is one grievous want; we have no real, earnest religious faith: the priests have killed religion in this country."

Why is this? Why is it that men of patriotic aspirations and of advanced political views are thus disposed to look askance at Christianity? Why, because instead of having had the Gospel presented to them as the perfect law of liberty, as the true charter of freedom to the nations, they have always seen it associated with those who have been the sworn friends of absolutism and repression. For despotism and priestcraft have always been faithful allies, leagued in an eternal conspiracy against the rights and liberties of mankind. Yes, we have a right to say to popes and cardinals, and prelates, and other representatives of official religion all over the world, "The name of God is blasphemed among the nations through you."

But who could describe how the Church of Christ was itself degraded and dishonoured by this alliance?—

When Aurelian, the Roman Emperor, conquered Palmyra, the City of the Desert, he took captive Zenobia, its illustrious queen. She is represented as having been a woman of surpassing and majestic beauty, as well as of a noble and heroic character. The conqueror, on his return to Rome, of course paraded her in his train, and, in order to give greater eclat to his triumph, had her clothed in the most gorgeous robes, and hung around her person a quantity of costly and splendid jewellery, and over all threw chains of gold, by which she was bound to his triumphal car, and compelled her thus to walk in procession through the streets of Rome, so borne down by the weight of these ornaments, and still more by the bitter humiliation to which she was exposed, until the very populace of Rome, hungry as they were for such displays, cried shame on the brutality of Aurelian. It is thus that the princes of the earth have acted towards the Church, the Bride of Christ. They have clothed her in the goodly Babylonish garments which they found among the ruins of heathenism; they have heaped upon her the adornments of worldly grandeur and dignity, and by golden chains of rich endowments have bound her to the car of their own ambition. But what heart who understands anything of what the Church of Christ should be does not swell with indignation at the shameful sight? What voice is not induced to cry, Loose her, and let her go! Cut asunder that chain of gold, fling away those meretricious, worldly ornaments, tear off the Babylonish garments, which only tend to fetter her free movements, and to mar her Divine beauty! Loose her, and let her go! and, instead of thus trailing in the dust, in the wake of earthly conquerors, she will arise and spread her wings, and be seen, like the vision that John saw, as an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell in the earth, to every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue.

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